

بِسْمِ اللَّهِ الرَّحْمَنِ الرَّحِيمِ  
 مُحَمَّدٌ وَآلُهُ عَلَى سُلَالَةِ الْكَرِيمِ

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## NOTES

### **The Nizam's Munificent Gift of Five Lakhs of Rupees (£37,000) for the London Mosque.**

From time to time we have drawn attention in these pages to the sheer necessity for a Mosque in London. The matter grows daily in urgency, more especially when we reflect that Berlin and Paris are already both provided, the former by private endeavour, the latter by the enlightened policy of the Government of the French Republic—circumstances which, naturally enough, have served to whet the ambition and stimulate the efforts of all in the British Isles—and indeed the British Dominions beyond the seas—to whom the Faith of Islam is near and dear.

Ever since his adoption of Islam, Lord Headley (El-Farooq) has nursed this idea of a Mosque in London; and at the conclusion of the Great War he approached the British Government with the suggestion that the project be officially undertaken in recognition of the services of those Muslims who had fallen for England. It is, therefore, with a deep sense of pleasure that we now have to record the glad news that the materialization of this long-cherished desire of the Muslims of the British Empire is at last in sight, thanks to the selfless efforts of Al-Hajj Lord Headley. As is already known to our readers,

## ISLAMIC REVIEW

his lordship undertook, last winter, the long journey to India to preside over the Annual Session of the All-India Tabligh Conference at Delhi, soon after the conclusion of which he was honoured by being the State guest of His Exalted Highness the Nizam of Hyderabad. Since his arrival in India Lord Headley has done all in his power to bring home to his brethren in the Faith from the pulpit, from the platform and through the Press the necessity for a Mosque in the metropolis of the British Empire; and it is matter for great satisfaction to find that in answer to his appeal for a fund of £100,000—the sum deemed necessary for a Mosque which may be worthy of the metropolis in style and dignity—His Exalted Highness has subscribed the princely sum of five lakhs for the sacred cause, and has further been pleased to authorize that the Mosque be called the Nizamia Mosque. His Exalted Highness will hold the Muslim world his debtor for ever for this most munificent act.

A Trust has been duly created and registered, with Lord Headley as its chairman; and it is earnestly hoped that Muslims throughout the world will contribute their quota liberally and thus help to reach the £100,000 required with as little delay as possible. Remittances can be sent, and cheques made payable, to the Imperial Bank of India, London Mosque Fund Account, Lahore, Br. India.

### **Eid-ul-Fitr, 1346.**

Eid festivals at Woking, whether the weather is dull or bright, always provide, in their English setting, a picturesque and instructive feature, not only for English Muslims but also for those from far away, who are cut off from Islamic atmosphere and traditions; for here, though it be only for a brief spell, they live again the home life of Islam. It is no exaggeration to say that, with the exception of the Holy City of Mecca, nowhere but at the Woking Mosque is there presented the opportunity of seeing so many different nationalities assembled together, united one to another by the one sole bond, the bond of Islam—the religion of peace and amity.

This year Muslims representing more than a dozen different



## NOTES

nationalities from all parts of the world assembled at the Mosque, Woking, on Friday, March 23rd, to celebrate the festival of Eid-ul-Fitr, which marks the close of the month of fasting. The day was dull but, for March, unexpectedly warm, and the spectacle of Muslim worshippers of every nation and rank in life (to the number of four hundred and over) ranged in files behind the Imám and prostrating themselves on the gorgeously carpeted lawn—fringed with trees bursting into the buds of early spring—depicted most impressively the all-embracing spirit of Islam.

There were Indians, Persians, Egyptians, Turks, Afghans, Arabs, Malays, Javanese, Caucasians, Syrians, Riffians, Iraqis, Kurds, Russian Muslims and Muslims of Western origin, together with Indian and Iraq cadets from Sandhurst and British Muslims, who had travelled long distances from all over England to participate in the happy occasion, despite the English weather, whose caprices are at their height during the months of March and April.

The morning opened with a marked dullness, which continued into the forenoon and was enhanced by intermittent showers of rain; the sun not deigning to shine until the time appointed for Prayers, arrangements for which had been made under spacious marquees in case the weather should prove inclement. But, to the surprise of all, the sun came out exactly at the time of Prayers. Only one fresh from the experiences of dreary, bleak, foggy English winter can possibly appreciate the joy which our Muslim friends and visitors experienced when the sun's rays changed the dripping gloom of the scene into a resplendent and gorgeous spectacle. The carpets were taken out and prayers said in the open, as shown by the illustrations appearing elsewhere in these pages. Following Prayers, performed at 11.30 a.m., came the address delivered by the acting-Imám Maulví Abdul 'l-Majíd, M.A., interrupted by a transient shower which drove the gathering to the shelter of the marquee. The Imám laid stress on the tolerance of Islam towards other creeds and on the fact that its power of assimilation transcends the final efforts of all other religious or political institutions in their striving for world peace.

## ISLAMIC REVIEW

Luncheon, served at 1 p.m. in the marquee, was succeeded by an interval of social intercourse, which in its turn gave place to a meeting of the British Muslim Society, at which Mr. J. W. Lovegrove, the Hon. Secretary of the Society, proposed that a message, wishing the Right Hon. Lord Headley, the President of the Society, a happy Eid, be cabled out on behalf of the Society's members. The resolution was unanimously carried.

The congregation was entertained with a sleight-of-hand display after the Friday Prayers (held at 2.30 p.m.) by our friend Mr. Qádir Bukhsh, the Indian Magician, and his precocious twelve-year-old son, Master Muhammad Haníf. Both father and son have already made their mark in England; and our sincere thanks are due to them for their trouble and for their striking success in breaking the dull monotony of the weather.

### **Chief Characteristics of the Muslim Festivals.**

The preceding short notice of the Eid-ul-Fitr brings us to another aspect of Muslim festivals which we believe may be considered with advantage, more especially because at the time of going to press the Christian world is making preparations for the festival of Easter. Those who have tried to institute comparisons between one religion and another will agree that the worth of a religion and the working of its leaven on the social life of a people can best be observed in its festivals, since it is here that the lighter side of life manifests itself.

Like all other religions, Islam, having realized the necessity of relaxation, recreation, a break from the monotony of the routine of life as well as the need for affording its followers occasions for coming in contact with one another, introduced two annual festivals. Thus it has not overburdened the Islamic social system with too many of them, as is the fault of the Russian Church, where every third day was set apart for the commemoration of a saint; nor did it leave human nature altogether uncatered for. These two festivals are Eid-ul-Fitr and Eid-ul-Azhá, the one celebrated on the first of the ninth



## NOTES

month of the Muslim year, the other on the tenth of the twelfth month. It is not our aim here to study the origin and details of the rites attached to these festivals; rather are we concerned with their distinctive features in relation to the festivals of other religions.

The first characteristic distinctive of the Muslim festivals is the ennobled and sublimated atmosphere which pervades them. This feature is peculiar to Islam; for Islam is the only religion which, by intertwining the worldly with the religious, has succeeded in sublimating all that is worldly. Islam knows that all social functions, if dissociated from the remembrance of Allah, are liable to get out of hand, and to degenerate into reckless indulgence. It has, therefore, enjoined, before everything else at these festivals, the saying of prayers. Those who have witnessed Muslim festivals will bear out the statement that the manner of them is in sharp contrast with the way in which the festivals of other religions are celebrated. By way of illustration, we may refer the reader to the depths of degeneracy into which the European carnival has fallen. The carnival originally was a feast which preceded the Christian period of fasting—Lent. But nowadays the Christian feast has lost its original significance and denotes nothing but riotous revelry or unfettered licence. At the occasion of the carnival in Europe, both men and women wear fancy dress and mob each other with confetti. They set at naught all social codes of morality. In a word, all that is sacred in normal life is suspended and its place taken by licence; and all this is at its height in Roman Catholic countries—more particularly France and Italy. Similar is the fate of the Hindú Dīwālī and Holī festivals in India.

It is truth, and nothing but truth, to say that it is the Muslim festivals alone among all festivals of all religions which have not deteriorated into mere revels.

It may come as strange to non-Muslims to learn that the happiness of a Muslim is confined to the saying of prayers; for these prayers are not only a means of bringing Muslims together to one place, but also they ennoble and uplift all who assemble to remember the name of Allah for a holy purpose.

The second great peculiarity of Islamic festivals lies in

## ISLAMIC REVIEW

their origin, independent of all astronomical considerations, seasons or personality-worship. Muslim festivals are *not* celebrated to appease an angered deity. They are *not* connected with the birth and death of a personage. They do *not* mark the changes in the stars. The Eid-ul-Fitr is a token of thanksgiving to God the Almighty for enabling us to perform our duty which we owe to Him and to ourselves; while the Eid-ul-Azhá is celebrated throughout the world with the sole aim of uniting ourselves in prayer with all those who are more fortunate in being able to perform the pilgrimage ceremony in Mecca. It is but in a subsidiary way that the great sacrifice of Ishmael by Abraham is also commemorated.

### The Christian and Hindu Festivals.

By way of comparison, let us pause to study the origins of the festivals of the Hindú and the Christian. Rákhí, an Indian Hindú festival, is observed to mark the beginning of the rainy season in India, in whose agricultural life the rainy season is the most important phenomenon. Díwálí, another Indian Hindú festival, marks the termination of that season and the beginning of the season of sowing. Holí is observed to celebrate a successful harvesting.

In the case of our Christian friends, their most important festivals are, indeed, ostensibly connected with the birth or death of their founder; but these very festivals have now conclusively been demonstrated to be replicas of pagan festivals. For example, Christmas, observed to celebrate the birth of Jesus Christ, for which a convenient date—December 25th—was selected from the pagan calendar, was in its origin a pagan festival. It is now definitely settled that Jesus Christ was not born on December 25th and not even 1,928 years ago. This is why the Eastern Church does not celebrate the birth of Jesus Christ on December 25th but on January 7th. Jesus Christ was born eight years before the commencement of the present era. The pagans used to hold December 25th sacred in connection with the birth of the sun; and this date was incorporated into the Christian theological system from motives of expediency and convenience.



## NOTES

Islam is the only religion which, if, on the one hand, it has succeeded in giving the heaven of religion even to the frivolous and lighter side of human life, has also supplied its followers with opportunities for seemingly rejoicing which other religions, with all their latitude and licence as displayed in time of carnival, have not apparently been able to create.

### Easter.

Further to illustrate our point, let us take the festival of Easter. It is now agreed that all the festivals which pass under the cloak of Christianity are either astronomical or pagan in origin. The annual festival of Easter is in commemoration of the Resurrection of Jesus Christ. The word "Easter"—Anglo-Saxon "Eastre, Eoster"; German "Ostern"—like the names of the days of the week—is a survival from the old Teutonic mythology. According to Bede, it is derived from Eostre or Ostâra, the Anglo-Saxon Goddess of Spring and Light, to whom the fourth month of the year, answering to our April, thence called Easter-Monath, was dedicated. There is no trace of the celebration of Easter as a Christian festival in the New Testament or in the writings of the Apostolic Fathers; what is clear is that this is a later accretion to the Christian social system. "Long before the Christian era Easter commemorated the resurrection of the Sun-God, and the date of celebration was then fixed in exactly the same manner as at present. Easter Day is always the First Sunday (Sun-day) following the full moon after the sun has entered the sign of the new birth; that sign being, by ancient custom, Aries, which is represented by the Ram or Lamb, and Easter thus, in pagan times, signified the redemption of the world from winter by the united action of Nature's forces operating through the sun and moon. The growing strength of the solar orb impregnates the earth with its life-giving warmth, causing seed to germinate and sap to rise in tree and shrub, while the cool magnetic rays of the moon nourish and sustain this life. Truly it is a glorious resurrection.

"Easter eggs, too, as the symbol of the germinating power of Eastertide, have been in evidence not only amongst Christian nations, but in so-called pagan lands, for in ancient

## ISLAMIC REVIEW

times the giving of Easter eggs symbolized the gift of the sun and moon to mankind " (*Two Worlds*, April 6, 1928).

Sir James George Frazer, in speaking of the origin of the Christian festival of Christmas, has the following on the assimilation of Easter<sup>1</sup> to the spring festival of Attis:—

"Thus it appears that the Christian Church chose to celebrate the birthday of its Founder on the 25th of December in order to transfer the devotion of the heathen from the Sun to him who was called the sun of righteousness. If that was so, there can be no intrinsic improbability in the conjecture that motives of the same sort may have led the ecclesiastical authorities to assimilate the Easter festival of the death and resurrection of their Lord to the festival of the death and resurrection of another Asiatic god which fell at the same season. Now the Easter rites still observed in Greece, Sicily, and Southern Italy bear in some respects a striking resemblance to the rites of Adonis, and I have suggested that the Church may have consciously adapted the new festival to its heathen predecessor for the sake of winning souls to Christ. But this adaptation probably took place in the Greek-speaking rather than in the Latin-speaking parts of the ancient world; for the worship of Adonis, while it flourished among the Greeks, appears to have made little impression on Rome and the West. Certainly it never formed part of the official Roman religion. The place which it might have taken in the affections of the vulgar was already occupied by the similar but more barbarous worship of Attis and the Great Mother. Now the death and resurrection of Attis were officially celebrated at Rome on the 24th and 25th of March, the latter being regarded as the spring equinox and therefore as the most appropriate day for the revival of a god of vegetation who had been dead or sleeping throughout the winter. But according to an ancient and widespread tradition Christ suffered on the 25th of March, and accordingly some Christians regularly celebrated the Crucifixion on that day without any regard to the state of the moon. This custom was certainly observed in Phrygia, Cappadocia, and Gaul, and there seem to be grounds for

<sup>1</sup> *Golden Bough* (abridged edn.), p. 359 *et seq.* London, 1924.



## NOTES

thinking that at one time it was followed also in Rome. Thus the tradition which placed the death of Christ on the 25th of March was ancient and deeply rooted. It is all the more remarkable because astronomical considerations prove that it can have had no historical foundation. The inference appears to be inevitable that the passion of Christ must have been arbitrarily referred to that date in order to harmonize with an old festival of the spring equinox. This is the view of that learned ecclesiastical historian Mgr. Duchesne, who points out that the death of the Saviour was thus made to fall upon the very day on which, according to a widespread belief, the world had been created. But the resurrection of Attis, who combined in himself the characters of the Divine Father and the Divine Son, was officially celebrated on the same day. When we remember that the festival of St. George in April has replaced the ancient pagan festival of the Parilia; that the festival of St. John the Baptist in June has succeeded to a heathen midsummer festival of water; that the festival of the Assumption of the Virgin in August has ousted the festival of Diana; that the feast of All Souls in November is a continuation of an old heathen feast of the dead; that the Nativity of Christ himself was assigned to the winter solstice in December because that day was deemed the Nativity of the Sun; we can hardly be thought rash or unreasonable in conjecturing that the other cardinal festival of the Christian Church—the solemnization of Easter—may have been in like manner, and from like motives of edification, adapted to a similar celebration of the Phrygian god Attis at the vernal equinox.

“At least it is a remarkable coincidence, if it is nothing more, that the Christian and heathen festivals of the Divine death and resurrection should have been solemnized at the same season and in the same places. For the places which celebrated the death of Christ at the spring equinox were Phrygia, Gaul, and apparently Rome; that is, the very regions in which the worship of Attis either originated or struck deepest root. It is difficult to regard the coincidence as purely accidental. If the vernal equinox, the season at which in the temperate regions the whole face of nature testifies to a fresh

## ISLAMIC REVIEW

outburst of vital energy, had been viewed from of old as the time when the world was annually created afresh in the resurrection of a god, nothing could be more natural than to place the resurrection of the new deity at the same cardinal point of the year. . . .

"Taken altogether, the coincidences of the Christian with the heathen festivals are too close and too numerous to be accidental."

On page 344 *et seq.* Sir James has the following remarks to make on the resemblance of the Easter festival to the rites of Adonis:—

"In Sicily gardens of Adonis are still sown in spring as well as in summer, from which we may perhaps infer that Sicily as well as Syria celebrated of old a vernal festival of the dead and risen god. At the approach of Easter, Sicilian women sow wheat, lentils, and canary-seed in plates, which they keep in the dark and water every two days. The plants soon shoot up. The stalks are tied together with red ribbons, and the plates containing them are placed on the sepulchres which, with the effigies of the dead Christ, are made up in Catholic and Greek churches on Good Friday, just as the gardens of Adonis were placed on the grave of the dead Adonis. The practice is not confined to Sicily. . . . The whole custom—sepulchres as well as plates of sprouting grain—may be nothing but a continuation, under a different name, of the worship of Adonis.

"Nor are these Sicilian . . . customs the only Easter ceremonies which resemble the rites of Adonis. 'During the whole of Good Friday a woven effigy of the dead Christ is exposed to view in the middle of the Greek churches and is covered with fervent kisses by the thronging crowd, while the whole church rings with melancholy monotonous dirges. Late in the evening, when it has grown quite dark, this waxen image is carried by the priest into the street on a bier adorned with lemons, roses, jessamine, and other flowers, and there begins a grand procession of the multitude who move in serried ranks, with slow and solemn step, through the whole town. Every man takes his taper and breaks out into doleful lamentation. At all the houses which the procession passes there are seated



## NOTES

women with censers to fumigate the marching host. Thus the community solemnly buries its Christ as if he had just died. At last the waxen image is again deposited in the church, and the same lugubrious chants echo anew. These lamentations, accompanied by a strict fast, continue till midnight on Saturday. As the clock strikes twelve, the Bishop appears and announces the glad tidings that 'Christ is risen,' to which the crowd replies, 'He is risen indeed,'<sup>1</sup> and at once the whole city bursts into an uproar of joy, which finds vent in shrieks and shouts. . . . In the very same hour people plunge from the extremity of the fast into the enjoyment of the Easter lamb and neat wine.'

"In like manner, the Catholic Church has been accustomed to bring before its followers in a visible form the death and resurrection of the Redeemer. . . .

"When we reflect how often the Church has skilfully contrived to plant the seeds of the new faith on the old stock of paganism, we may surmise that the Easter celebration of the dead and risen Christ was grafted upon a similar celebration of the dead and risen Adonis, which, as we have reason to believe, was celebrated in Syria at the same season. . . ."

### **"Barbarism of the Bible."**

The attitude of the Muslim towards the Bible is very clearly laid down in the 83rd verse of the third chapter of the Holy Qur-án thus: "Say: We believe in Allah . . . and what was given to Moses and Jesus and to the prophets from their Lord . . ." Even so, he feels differences with Christians arise as soon as he subjects its text to the searchlight of criticism. Time was when the Muslim was alone in his desire to expunge from the Bible all the folk-lore with which it has been overlaid; but now he may well feel gratified to find his standpoint endorsed even by Christian Divines. Some time ago Bishop Gore, in a remarkable sermon delivered in Grosvenor Chapel, Mayfair, spoke of the credibility of some of the Old Testament

<sup>1</sup> Devout Christians even to-day greet each other on Easter Sunday with the words "Christ is risen," and "Christ is risen, risen indeed."—Ed. *I.R.*

## ISLAMIC REVIEW

stories, and quoted Tolstoy's saying that "the Jews are masters of story-telling." He continued by saying:—

We are nourishing a vain hope if we suppose that the early chapters of Genesis or the stories about Daniel and Enoch are ever going to be accepted as history.

They have none of the characteristics of history as real science has learned to detect them, and it is no good kicking against facts. We will merely delay the necessary adjustment of Christianity to the new world of ideas by going on murmuring and perplexing the minds of our children, instead of being perfectly frank with our own minds and with others.

When we make that heroic resolution, we shall find that, if we lose something, we shall have gained more. The Old Testament will become not a less profitable, but a more profitable thing, when we admit that, by its nature, it is imperfect, and contains a vast deal of barbarism.

It is no good playing the Canute. You must have the courage frankly to accept the indisputable verdicts of historical science.<sup>1</sup>

### **The Bible ought to be Rewritten.**

In connection with the above we can give our readers some notion of the headway already made by an idea which, not so long ago, would have been deemed unthinkable, if we quote the words of Mr. A. H. Sykes, headmaster of a Manx secondary school, which appeared in the *Sunday Chronicle* for November 27, 1927, under the heading "The Bible ought to be Rewritten." Mr. Sykes, in the course of a lecture in the Isle of Man, said:—

If I had my way I would gather every Bible from the Sunday schools and make a huge bonfire of them. For of all the dull, uninteresting books, the Bible is the worst. All animals were made by God and the highest came out of the lowest. God bless Bishop Barnes for the stand he has taken.

The *Sunday Chronicle* continues by saying: "Mr. Sykes, it is generally realized, has given voice to a movement which has been growing secretly for some time. Already the movement is finding supporters among a section of the clergy.

"The petition to be made will plead for a complete new translation and revision of the Bible. Some of the things, it will be submitted, which should be omitted for the new version, are: the story of the Creation in Genesis; the story of the Garden of Eden; the account of the Flood.

<sup>1</sup> *Daily Express*, Sept. 19, 1927.



## NOTES

"Recent controversies have shown that it is now widely accepted that these stories are legendary, and many clergymen are of the opinion that they should go."

The *Sunday Chronicle* further gives the views and opinions of a few of the clergy which, as their perusal will show, are conflicting.

The Rev. Desmond Morse-Boycott, the well-known Anglo-Catholic parson, said:—

I agree with Mr. Sykes so far as his remarks apply to the reading of the Bible in council schools. No doctrinal significance is there placed upon the Scriptures, and therefore they are obscure and dull. . . ."

A former minister of a big Midland church, and now a Sociologist, told the *Sunday Chronicle* that in his opinion it was high time that there was a revision of the Bible.

One reason for its lack of appeal to the modern mind [he said] is that it is in places hopelessly unscientific. You cannot expect the young mind of to-day to take Jonah seriously, or the story of Adam and Eve.

People do not read the Bible to-day, because they feel that it is out of date, and that even its morality takes no account of the facts of human nature.

A member of the International Bible Students' Association rejected with scorn the idea of rewriting the Bible. He said:—

God's Word cannot be tampered with. We need the Bible more than ever to-day, and one of the main troubles of the times is that the Bible is not read.

Its teaching has never been equalled [he continued], but it makes difficult demands on a pleasure-loving people. The Bible has not been tried and found wanting. It has been found difficult and never tried.

### The Bible and the Prophets.

We have often wished that the Christian clergy would apply the same standard of criticism when dealing with those passages in the Biblical narrative which asperse the moral characters of prophets and righteous men as that which they use in appraising untenable dogma; for this is a matter to which no reference, or, if any, very scanty reference, is found. Why the Christian Higher Critic confines his strictures to the stories of the Immaculate Conception and the Virgin Birth—perhaps because they are not to be accepted as literal facts

## ISLAMIC REVIEW

by any who have studied the first principles of biology, or because they are merely solar myths, the mythology of Greece and lore of Egypt incorporated in the Christian tradition long after the crucifixion of Jesus Christ—or to the stories of the Creation, the Garden of Eden, and the Flood, is beyond our comprehension. It is passing strange that even those who are quite ready to admit the untenability of some of the hopelessly unscientific stories in the Bible adopt quite a different attitude if the moral standard of the Bible is questioned. One reads, for example, in the *Sunday Chronicle* for November 27, 1927, the following views of Professor A. M. Low, the well-known scientist, on the opinions of Mr. Sykes quoted above :—

I disagree entirely with Mr. Sykes. I think the principles enumerated in the Bible are extremely good, and are most beautifully stated. If people would use their brains in order to understand the underlying meaning of the Bible, there would never be any need to suggest that science and religion disagree.

One of the most important things in the world is the fact that science has demonstrated that there is a tendency towards progress and improvement. If people used that argument, instead of expecting the public to take statements on faith, it would be the finest possible argument in favour of belief in the principles in the Bible.

The Rev. Dinsdale T. Young, too, pastor of the Wesleyan Central Hall, Westminster, said:—

I much deplore such an utterance, and it had no business to be addressed to a Wesleyan Methodist meeting.

The Bible does not require rewriting—it must be retained as it has stood throughout the centuries. It is to-day the greatest power for morality as well as for the furtherance of religion.

One wonders what both Professor Low and Mr. Young understand by styling the Bible “extremely good” or “the greatest power for morality.” One wonders what those who hold such a high opinion of the Bible really think of the verses dealing with Lot,<sup>1</sup> which impute to him illicit connections with his own daughters; with Solomon,<sup>2</sup> describing him as an idol-worshipper; with Aaron,<sup>3</sup> saddling him with polytheism; or with David,<sup>4</sup> branding him as an adulterer. A study of the above passages, especially those concerned with David and

<sup>1</sup> Gen. xix. 30–38.

<sup>2</sup> Exod. xxxii.

<sup>3</sup> 1 Kings xi. 3–8.

<sup>4</sup> 2 Sam. xi. 2–13.



## EUROPE'S DEBT TO ISLAM

Uriah, and with Lot, is such as to cause one to blush for shame, even in privacy. Lot, the nephew of Abraham, it might be argued, was not a prophet, but 2 Peter ii. 7, 8 regards him as "a righteous man." One wonders how it is possible to regard a person as "righteous" and at the same time as being capable of all the sordid sin of which the Bible speaks. It is true to say that the Bible contradicts itself, for if such is the standard of morality which it expects from the Prophets of God, one wonders what it can be supposed to require from ordinary human beings. And yet again, what standard of life can children of impressionable age, or even men of mature years, set for themselves in view of these stories?

And this book is described as "extremely good"! The Qur-án came and removed all stigma attached to the character of the prophets in the Bible: a cursory study of the Book of Islam will prove the truth of this. The Qur-án teaches that the Prophets are born sinless and die sinless: and this is why the aspersions heaped upon the persons of the Prophets by the Bible have been dogmatically denied in the Qur-án.

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## EUROPE'S DEBT TO ISLAM :

(The Arabs in the Middle Ages, and their Influence  
on the Culture of Europe)

By DR. GUSTAV DIERCKS

(Translated from the German by 'Abdu 'l-Majid, M.A.)

(Continued from February number, p. 68.)

But Christianity had to undergo many other changes during the first three centuries of its existence, and eventually out of monotheism there emerged Trinitarianism. If, however, an attempt was made to save the former by the teaching that three equalled one, the understanding masses, who by nature were absolutely incapable of comprehending the abstract and the symbolical, had to give everything a concreteness, and in reality they worshipped God in three forms. Nor did they stop there: they built up a polytheism and a mythology the like of

\* A translation of *Die Araber im Mittelalter und ihr Einfluss auf die Kultur Europa's*, by Dr. Gustav Diercks, Leipzig, 2nd Edn., 1882, pp. 11-19.

## ISLAMIC REVIEW

which cannot be found, or even imagined, elsewhere. The Virgin Mary and all the historical and mythical martyrs and ascetics were venerated in pictures and were made either into patron saints or advowees. Both paradise and hell were peopled with armies of imaginary figures, whose materialness, intercession and intrusion into human affairs were believed to be something self-understood by the lower class of people, just as well as the people of the ancient age believed in their own respective ones as being the result of their fantasy, which was stirred into action by the god-consciousness. All the efforts which Christianity makes to free itself from the blame of polytheism, all the sophistries of the theologians in this respect, are useless; for the true monotheism has never reigned supreme in the belief of the great masses. The reason for this lies in the nature of the human mind, which can only reach a right understanding of abstract concepts through the most scrupulous schooling.

But now, as regards the real teachings of Jesus Christ, there was scarcely one which ever came to fulfilment in accordance with the words of the evangelists (Gospels), excepting, indeed, the one which at all times has been held to be applicable. We refer, of course, to Matthew x. 34, which reads: "Think not that I am come to send peace on earth: I came not to send peace, but a sword." For quarrel, hatred and rage for persecution have so marked out Christianity in all ages, and have so ridiculed the teaching of love for one's neighbour, that one hardly knows what to think of the historical understanding of those people who, even to-day, represent the teaching of love for one's neighbour firstly as a new teaching of Jesus, and secondly as a characteristic of Christianity.

Although Christ had spoken against the formalism of the temple services and against the showiness of piety, against the parrot-like and senseless repetition of prayers, which practices openly betrayed all those who adopted them, although Christ had discarded priestcraft, nevertheless the very first exact details about the organizations of the Christian societies afford an ample proof of the fact that within a few centuries after the alleged death of Jesus Christ the presidents of the societies



## EUROPE'S DEBT TO ISLAM

had already usurped the rule. Priestcraft comes into existence very easily. Belief and prayer very soon degenerate and become the mere outward marks of a pious Christian, while the lust for power and rule on the part of the clergy very soon disregards all limits. In this manner a cult was built up by exploiting the Egyptian and the Oriental ceremonies whose sole aim is the exciting of the senses, a cult which is its own parallel in matters of outward pomp. This made the commandment against possessing anything which was promulgated by the Saviour null and void. The expenditure which a cult dictates, the exaggerated, prodigious pomp of the priestly robes, necessitate immensely great sums; and the lust for power on the part of the clergy can most fittingly be paired with the greed which respects no commandments, which saps morality and recognizes no scruples when selecting a means to an end. Immediately Christianity was made into a State religion by Constantine the Great, because, being a shrewd politician, he had recognized its convenience and considered it beneficial to take account of it, the world of free-will and of mental despotism by the clergy was sacrificed. The Roman Bishops in their position, with the help of their high prelates, cardinals, clerical and juridical counsellors, usurped as popes the lead of the Catholic Church which from now on followed in the wake of Roman imperialism and distinguished itself from it only through the priestly robes. Here it is that begins one of the saddest and, in every respect, most deplorable periods of world-history, because the clergy has been at all times and in all places an enemy to the education of the people. It systematically throttled the mind of the Christian people. One was allowed to think only that which the Church wanted or prescribed. To the despotism of the church, its impatience, its hatred for everything which called up the memory of the pre-Christian period or of the Greek and Roman ancient age, were sacrificed the treasures of the literature and art of the ancient age. It destroyed whatever it could not force into its service or whatever would not fall in with its wishes. History can produce innumerable instances of the barbarism and anarchic ways of the Christian Bishops and of their congre-

## ISLAMIC REVIEW

gations. I will content myself with quoting one only: the destruction of the invaluable library of Serapis at Alexandria in the year 389 by Archbishop Theophilus of Alexandria.<sup>1</sup> Many of the wonderful buildings and the most beautiful sculptures of the ancient Greeks shared the same fate at the hands of the fanatical Christians, who wilfully opposed everything which was related to Greek ideals.

It is true that there were some Fathers of the Church who made themselves prominent by their considerable knowledge, but these were, unfortunately, a few exceptions only, and their knowledge was subordinated to the control of faith and made use of in combating heathenism. Sometimes it merely served as a means of glory, or of enhancing their position over the superstitious people. Many intelligent bishops recognized that the very loftiness of the Christian teachings rendered it impossible to work on the masses. They realized, also, that the ancient age and the traditional, hallowed through the century-long national life, could not be uprooted and cast aside without much ado, and they saw that the most efficacious method for the spread of Christianity lay in combining the old with the new, in putting the new picture into the old frames. They knew very well that the Christian religion had not made any addition of much importance to the art or to the culture of the world as a whole; for even the Christian art-symbols had for their pattern the forms given by Mithraism, by the cult of Isis, and by the Egyptian cults generally. They realized only too well that Greek literature and art, Roman culture and architecture, Roman law, the accomplishments, in short, of the earlier periods preceding Christianity, could alone supply the material with which one could afford to build, and they understood very well that Christianity, as it was, had not created any new culture, was not, in fact, creative or productive at all.

<sup>1</sup> Gibbon, *Decline and Fall of the Roman Empire*, chap. xxviii. p. 208 (London, 1897), says: "The valuable library of Alexandria was pulled down and destroyed, and nearly twenty years afterwards the appearance of the empty shelves excited the regret and indignation of every spectator whose mind was not totally darkened by religious prejudice."



## EUROPE'S DEBT TO ISLAM

It was in this way that, from the times of Constantine, sprang up those adaptations of which the history of art and of literature could supply innumerable instances. The old pictures of the gods were restamped as patron saints; the pagan festivals were made to pass as church ones; the heathen poems were remoulded into Christian ones; while in the stead of the old gods and the heroes they put Christ and the Virgin Mary, the saints and the martyrs. Of this amalgam, an illustration, very pregnant and full of meaning, is offered by that statue of Constantine which he caused to be set up in Byzantium after he had conquered that city and made it the capital of his East-Roman empire. On one socle, under which the supposed Trojan palladium lay buried, and which, like other important tokens of fate, was brought from Rome, rose to the height of a hundred feet a column of porphyry which, too, is of Roman origin. On it was erected a statue of Apollo bearing, however, the head of Constantine which was surrounded with a radiant crown made of the nails from the cross of Jesus Christ. Superstition, vanity and sham belief—all were here, on a grand scale, combined with the products of Roman and Greek ideals and those of Christianity.

The mental poverty of the Christian writers, with an exception of the few Fathers of the Church, who were educated in Greek and Alexandrian high schools, was amazingly great. The literature of that period will serve as an example to show what a killing and atrophying effect the orthodox belief had upon the most splendid gift of man's mental powers. The occupation of many of the writers was confined to dressing and adapting the writings of the earlier pagan writers for the benefit of Christianity; in other words, to fabricating and writing a corresponding contemporary history. There were others who worked up the verses of the Greek poets afresh, and this is why, for instance, that the poems describing the ailing Christ ascribed to Gregory of Nazianzus (329-389) are composed very largely of verses from Euripides. Further, we find, that the *Homerkentron*<sup>1</sup> which were begun by Pelagius

<sup>1</sup> The title of an important work of the Alexandrian literature.

## ISLAMIC REVIEW

(360-420) and continued by Eudokia, the wife of Theodosius II, and which give a description of the life of Christ, were made up from the verses of Homer, the names only having been altered. Even in those places where one decidedly presumes originality, namely, in the legendary poems, which embody in a literary form the mind of those days, we search in vain for originality, because the Greek romances and Oriental fairy-tales are really the bedrock and the foundations upon which are built the foolish stories which have been woven round the persons of saints and martyrs. Nay, the clerical hymns, even at their noblest, have, with very few exceptions, a leaning towards early developed and well-defined forms. The most remarkable accomplishments—and they are simply characteristic of the period—are those affectations of verses in which complicated rhyming, the making of artificial monograms and symbolical figures, the smallness of the script, and other similar playthings, are the outstanding feature. One cannot expect more cogent proofs of the mental impotence, resulting from the pressure of orthodoxy, than the ones which are everywhere in evidence during this period of world literature. A sharp, active and healthy mind which has the power of creating, of producing something original, works up even the foreign matter which it takes, in such a way that the foreign loses its extraneous character, beneath the stamp of originality imprinted by the creative mind. It may be said that the Church accomplished this too, in so far as it forced its teachings on countless multitudes of people with fire and sword, with destruction and desolation, never shrinking from the use of all available means to achieve its end and in so far as, where-soever it went, it throttled their mind and checked its normal progress. The difference, however, is that whatsoever things the Church combined did not fuse into one, did not become a new whole, but only appeared as such externally.

In addition, came the secularization of the Church, and schisms in the Church, each trying to destroy the other. All this naturally resulted in an internal crumbling of the Church in proportion with its outward expansion. The pictures given us by the enlightened and well-informed clergy in respect to



## EUROPE'S DEBT TO ISLAM

the moral decline of their profession, and of the sacrilegious actions done in the name of Christ, are truly obnoxious.

In a few centuries, therefore, the whole of the structure of the Church was nearing collapse and the high standard of culture which had adorned past years was also overwhelmed shortly afterwards and razed to the ground by the corrupting influence of the Church. Its blind religious fanaticism was the sole cause of its destruction. It is a very sad picture which is presented to the student of culture of that period. The mind of the thinker frittered away its energies in dogmatical quibbles and the splitting of straws. The researches of ancient times were trampled upon; they were ridiculed and they were destroyed; for they were pagan. The libraries becoming, for the most part, involved in the age-long dispute over images and dogmas, were wrecked by fanatical hordes of uneducated monks of the mutually impugning parties. Nay, many of them destroyed with their own hands many of the literary treasures which they had collected, because often the possession of a book could be fatal to the whole of a family.<sup>1</sup> For it was under Theodosius that heathendom succumbed completely. In the years 381 and 391 were introduced law after law through which gradually non-Christian sacrifice and temple worship, and confession of any other religious belief other than that of Christianity was forbidden and persecuted as a crime deserving of capital punishment. The last vestige of tolerance disappeared, and however hard a few individuals worked to protect the remains of the sacred antiquities, they could not do anything against the bloodthirsty hordes who took pleasure in destruction against the will of the emperors and the empresses—the females helped bravely to accelerate the destructive work in the name of Christianity—they could not achieve anything against the all-powerfulness of the priests, the worthy promulgators of love for one's neighbours.

It is true that in the libraries of Constantinople were

<sup>1</sup> "Every kind of manuscript which could be seized," says Draper, "was forthwith burnt. Everywhere men in terror destroyed their libraries, for fear that some unfortunate sentence in any of the books should involve them and their families in destruction" (*Intellectual Development of Europe*, p. 318).

## ISLAMIC REVIEW

collected a goodly store of the treasures of the literature of the ancients, but the greater part of it was sacrificed to appease religious fanaticism, so that we, living in these days, cannot ascertain definitely what heights the scientific attainments of those days had already reached. The Byzantines and the Christians in general not only did not continue the researches of their predecessors,<sup>1</sup> but destroyed them, so that their successors in many cases had to begin afresh, had to lay anew the foundations of science which the ancients had already developed with great thoroughness. The modern sciences are lifting the curtain day by day which is lying over the ancient age, and offer proof to the effect that the Egyptian and the Alexandrian physical researches must have reached a very amazingly high point.

The whole of learning from now on concentrated itself in the hands of the Fathers of the Church; and let us see how it was cultivated. True Philosophy had to go to the wall because she became the handmaid of Faith and consequently unable to develop herself farther; reason dared not put its surgical knife to the Christian dogmas. The Schools of Philosophy were closed down—the last of them disappearing in A.D. 529. The renowned commentator on Plato, Hypatia, was cruelly done to death by St. Cyril in 414, in Alexandria. Eusebius remarks on philosophy as follows: "It is not through ignorance of the things admired by philosophers, but rather through the contempt for such useless labours, that we think so little of these matters and turn our souls to the exercise of better things instead." In the same spirit Lactantius holds all philosophy to be "empty and false." Speaking with reference to the heretical doctrine of the globular form of the world, he says: "Is it possible that men can be so absurd as to believe that the tops of the trees on the other side of the earth hang downwards, and that men have their feet higher than their heads? If you ask them, How do you defend these mon-

<sup>1</sup> Draper says in his book *A History of the Intellectual Development of Europe*: "Nearly 2,000 years had to intervene between Archimedes and Newton, nearly 1,700 years between Hipparch and Kepler, nearly 2,000 years between Hero—the first inventor of the machine worked by steam which worked in Serapim—and James Watt."



## EUROPE'S DEBT TO ISLAM

strosities?—how is it that things do not fall away from the earth on the other side?—they reply that the nature of things is such that heavy bodies tend towards the centre, like the spokes of a wheel, while light bodies, such as clouds, smoke and fire, tend away from the centre towards the heavens on all sides. Now I am really at a loss what to say of those who, when they have once gone wrong, steadily persevere in their folly, and defend one absurd opinion by another.” On the question of the antipodes, St. Augustine asserts that it is impossible there should be inhabitants on the opposite side of the earth, since no such race is recorded by Scripture among the descendants of Adam.”<sup>1</sup>

The Greek astronomers had already made careful and important observations. Timocharis had determined the movements of Venus. Eratosthenes had calculated the circumference of the earth. Posidonius, who died in 51 B.C., had come to the same calculations. The methods of both of them are described in Cleomedes. The result which the investigations and researches of Eratosthenes yield deviate but slightly from the calculations of the French learned professors. Astrology had developed itself along with it, but the relation between both of them became very soon just the reverse. For the results of astronomy were subordinated completely to astrology. Geography, mathematics, mechanics—nay, even many of the branches of industrial activity or industrialism, in which the ancients had already achieved important results, the whole, in short, of the sciences of antiquity—were sacrificed to the words of Holy Writ. “Euclid and Apollonius were looked upon as useless; the geography of Ptolemy was regarded as a blunder. The mechanical inventions of Archimedes” and those of Alexandrians “disappeared in face of the miracles, worked through the saints and the relics and the shrines.”<sup>2</sup>

Exactly in the same way medicine disappeared. Quacks usurped the places of the qualified doctors—quacks who cured through miraculous relics; the strength of belief was considered a substitute for the application of medicinal means of

<sup>1</sup> See Draper, *op. cit.*, vol. i. p. 315 (London).

<sup>2</sup> Draper, *op. cit.*

healing. Wherein lay the purpose of building highly equipped hospitals and scientific medical establishments for such sick people?

Gregory I, who has won the attribute of the Great, distinguished himself as much by his rage for destruction, as for his enmity towards all higher education. This "Slave of the Slaves of God" had one principle in view: "Ignorance is the mother of piety," acting upon which he not only committed to the flames all the mathematical stories of Rome, but also burned the precious Palatine Library which was founded by the Emperor Augustus. He destroyed the greater part of the writings of Livy; he forbade the study of the classics; he maimed and mutilated the architectural remains of the ancient days (Draper, *ibid.*, p. 367).

(To be continued.)

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### THE SACRAMENT OF THE EUCHARIST

By R. LISSAN

THE subject of the third sacrament, which is the last of the division which claims to make a perfect Christian, is the most important of the series and the one around which much bitterness, controversy and persecution has centred, and, moreover, the one which has quite belied its name and origin. It is the basis of the belief of the sincere and earnest Christian of every denomination, especially that of the Roman Catholic. This sacrament, as will be shown later, is a perpetuation and copy of a rite which was practically universal in early religions and connected in one way or another with sun-worship. It was in general use long before the Christian Era or the life or incarnation of Jesus Christ.

Its name, to begin with, is derived from two Greek words: *eu*, meaning "well," and *chairo*, "rejoice," meaning literally "to give thanks." The belief is that the sacramental elements as administered to the recipient become, at the moment of



## THE SACRAMENT OF THE EUCHARIST

reception, changed into the actual body and blood of Jesus Christ, the Son of God, who incarnated here for the purpose of the redemption of man and who suffered crucifixion here for man's salvation.

But before the subject of the Eucharist or Roman Mass is considered, it will be well to examine the story of the crucifixion on which it is based. Jesus of Nazareth, said to be born of a Virgin, on December 25th, in a cave at Bethlehem, according to one Gospel, at Nazareth according to another, suffered crucifixion on Calvary for the redemption of man and the procuring of his salvation. This is a fact recorded also of a number of crucified world saviours of virgin birth, from all over the world. According to the Church, by his death Jesus Christ freed us from the penalty of the sin of our first parents, and his body and blood are miraculously produced from the elements of the Eucharist. The whole story of the epistles regarding the life of Jesus, from his birth, baptism in the Jordan, crucifixion, meeting with the Galilean fishermen, betrayal by Judas, etc., can be demonstrated to be astronomical phenomena, but these do not come within the scope of this article.

It will be shown that in the celebration of the Lord's Supper and its perpetuation as the Eucharist there are two distinct customs that are merged: firstly, the Agape or Love Feast, and secondly, the Passover of the Jews. We have mentioned that the word "Eucharist" means a "thanksgiving" or "rejoicing well"; and we know that soon after the celebration of the Supper, Jesus was crucified. This particular occasion was the celebration of the Jewish Passover. There are two accounts of the Last Supper, as given in Mark xiv. 22, and Matthew xxvi. 26: "And as they were eating, he took bread, blessed it, and brake it and gave it to them, and said, Take, this is my body; and taking a cup, he gave thanks and gave it to them, and they all drank of it; and he said to them, This is my blood of the covenant which is shed on behalf of many." But Matthew says "eat" after the word "take," and adds "for the remission of sins" at the end. In the Gospel of John, the death of Jesus synchronizes with the killing of the Passover

## ISLAMIC REVIEW

Lamb towards the evening of the fourteenth day of Nisan, so that the Last Supper falls before the Passover. There appears to have been in Jewish practice a family social meal, independent of the Passover celebration. At ordinary Jewish meals even to-day (cf. Singer, *Daily Prayer Book*, p. 287) we find that the following blessing is said over the bread: "Blessed art Thou, O Lord our God, King of the Universe, Who bringest forth bread from the earth," and before drinking, "Blessed art Thou, Who createst the fruit of the vine." It is probable that such words as "He took bread and blessed it, and he took the cup in his hands," are implied in the statement (*Encyclopedia Biblica*, p. 1419). This supposition is strengthened by the earliest extant formula of the Christian Eucharist. In *Teaching of the Apostles* (chap. ix. f.), we find certain thanksgivings which are clearly of earlier date than the manual in which they are embodied. Two of these are respectively concerning the cup and the broken bread, the third is to be said at the conclusion of the meal. Their language suggests that they are Christian adaptations of Jewish graces and it is worthy of note that they survived as Christian graces after the Eucharist had ceased to be a meal and had become a distinct act of worship with an elaborate liturgy in which the primitive formulæ have left but scanty traces.

We see, then, that the Eucharist had in its earliest form an element in common with the ordinary Jewish meal which was sanctified by thanksgiving uttered over the bread and the cup. This element is especially recognized in all the narratives of this institution. The chief point of distinction is that these acts of thanksgiving came, not at the beginning of the meal, but during its progress and at its close, and that they were accompanied by utterances prompted by the unique circumstance of the Last Supper (*Encyclopedia Biblica*, p. 1419).

There is a difference between the views expressed by St. John and St. Paul. There is no mention of the institution of Baptism or the Eucharist in John, and in chapter iii. emphasis is laid on the absolute necessity of a new birth by water and the Spirit, and in chapter vi. the absolute necessity of feeding on the flesh and blood of Christ. Paul's idea is expressed in



## THE SACRAMENT OF THE EUCHARIST

1 Corinthians x. 16, where he says: "The loaf which we break, is it not the communion or fellowship of the body of Christ? For one loaf, one body, we, the many are: for we all of us partake of the one loaf." This is his practical comment on "This is my body" (*Encyclopedia Biblica*, p. 1421).

In the *Epistles of Ignatius, Smyrn*, 7, Ignatius says: "They abstain from the (Sacrament) Eucharist or thanksgiving and prayer, because they allow not that the Eucharist is the flesh of our Lord Jesus Christ (that flesh) which suffered for our sins, which the Father raised up. They therefore that gainsay the gift of God die in their disputing." The thought of the Eucharist in counteracting death comes out as a belief held in apostolic times, in Ephesians xx., where it says: "Breaking one bread, which is the medicine of immortality, a preventive remedy, that we should not die, but live in Jesus Christ for ever." And in Romans vii. we read also: "I desire the bread of God, which is the flesh of Jesus Christ . . . and as I drink, I desire his blood, which is love incorruptible." In *Traill*. 8 also, it says: "In faith, which is the flesh of the Lord, and in love, which is the blood of Jesus Christ" (*Encyclopedia Biblica*, p. 1424).

There is evidence to show that the Eucharist was regarded as a commemoration of the redemption effected by the death of Christ (1 Cor. xi. 26) and that Christ himself was spoken of as the Paschal Lamb by Paul (1 Cor. v. 7). It is evident that the foundation of the Eucharist in early Christianity lays on the thanksgiving meal which was the Jewish custom on the eve of Passover, and further, it is evident that the custom was blended with the idea of Christ—sacrifice of Christ—Paschal Lamb or Passover—with Paul's probable aim to reconcile the Jew and the Gentile in one bond and the blending of the ancient faith of sacrifice with the religion he was seeking to found and spread.

As mentioned above, in the early Church, then, were found and celebrated the Agape, Love Feasts or Charity Suppers, as they were sometimes called, and evidence points to the assumption that they were the representatives of a Jewish custom handed on to Christianity. The *Encyclopedia Biblica* expresses

## ISLAMIC REVIEW

the opinion that the Agape was not separate from the Eucharist. The causes that led to the separation later were four, namely:—

(a) The increase of numbers made the common supper more and more difficult in itself and less and less suitable for the solemn celebration of the united Eucharist.

(b) Disorders, such as those at Corinth, display of roughness and rowdiness, were always liable to occur where a large number of persons partook freely of food and drink. The ordinances made at a later time for the quiet conduct of the Agape show that there were dangers of this sort to be guarded against.

(c) The liturgical accompaniments of the Eucharist underwent a great expansion. Even in the time of Clement of Rome (A.D. 96) we find an elaborate intercession and a long form of thanksgiving in use.

(d) As the symbol of the unity of the Church, the Eucharist became restricted to occasions when the Bishop or his deputy was present to celebrate it. In this and in every way it increased in formal solemnity and became less compatible with a simple meal.

Thus, one can see the grounds on which the elaborate and complicated ritual of the Mass has developed. The idea of vicarious atonement in pre-Christian religions and the idea of crucifixion has elaborated the idea of blood and sacrifice of life and produced what certain Rationalists have described as a gospel of gore in referring to Christianity and particularly its history.

We will now make an attempt to analyse the Agape or Love Feasts. Hastings (*Encyclopedia of Religion*), in the section on it, says: "The view which was almost universal and is still by far the most common, is that the Christians first celebrated the Eucharist and also a common meal to which some liturgical importance was attached and which was called the 'Agape' or 'Love Feast,' and that the Eucharist and Agape were at first united, but either from some reason, abuses or persecution, they were disjointed at some time in the latter half of the first century or the first quarter of the second, though the time



## THE SACRAMENT OF THE EUCHARIST

of separation differed in some countries. . . . The Christians had charity suppers parallel to the Greek guilds. These cannot always be distinguished from the Eucharist. The Eucharist was gradually separated from a common meal; the original institution developed in two ways, liturgically into the Eucharist and socially into the Supper, and the more these two sides developed, the more decided became the separation."

The review of the evidence on the Agape is as follows: "Looking back at the quotations and references, we may obtain some idea of the history of the Agape. To the present writer it appears, after a careful consideration of what has been written in the past few years, that Bishop Lightfoot's view of the matter has not, in the main, been shaken. The evidence seems to point to the apostles, probably because of the precedent of the Last Supper, having combined the Eucharist with a common meal, which before long was called the Agape. Yet the Agape was not universal. It was dropped, in some places earlier than in others, and then resumed under somewhat different forms. At first, as the evidence seems to show, the Agape was a meal for the whole community. To call it always a 'charity supper,' as it undoubtedly became in some or most places later on, is a little misleading. It was a supper for all, rich and poor alike, though, no doubt, provided almost entirely by the rich, a sign of Christian unity and marked by liturgical forms. Later, the thought of the rich providing for the poor and of the Agape being a charity became prominent; and this was perhaps largely due to the rise of funeral or commemorative feasts, in which the relatives of the deceased gave in his honour, or rich people generously gave in honour of a martyr, a banquet to the poor. These commemorative feasts and the ordinary Agape seem to have been confused, at least in many places, during the fourth century. It is important to bear in mind that the custom of the Agape, being a non-essential, varied in different countries. Perhaps it was never quite universal; certainly it was only of partial adoption for the greater part of the first four centuries.

"To summarize the evidence, we may say that in Acts and in Corinthians the Eucharist and the Agape seem to have been

## ISLAMIC REVIEW

combined; in Jude and 2 Peter perhaps dissociated. In the *Didaché* and Ignatius they were probably combined, and perhaps also in Bithynia quite up to the time of Pliny, when they were separated and the Agape dropped. In Justin the Agape does not seem to have been actually existent, perhaps on account of Trajan's Edict. In Celsus, Minucius Felix, and the Epistle to Diognetus, it is found existing. In Gaul, at the end of the second century, it had probably been dropped, as it is not mentioned by Irenæus. Lucian's satire and the Acts of Perpetua probably testify to the custom of a 'prison Agape.' Clement of Alexandria, Tertullian, Cyprian, the Canons of Hippolytus and some Acts of Martyrs in the third century, attest the Agape as existing and separate from the Eucharist; the old *Didascalia* describes it as being a feast to old women. In the fourth-century 'Church Orders' the Agape is a common meal, not *only* a charity supper; it is entirely separate from the Eucharist. From the Canons of the Council of Laodicea, Gangra and Carthage (No. 3) we gather that it was held in churches; perhaps the evidence shows a tendency for it to disappear at this time. Augustine treats it as a charity supper, a feeding of the poor. In the fifth century there is a remarkable testimony of Socrates and Bozomen to the exceptional case of Agape and Eucharist combined in Egypt; but there is nothing to show that this custom had always existed there. It may, on the other hand, be a relic of old custom; or on the other, it may be a revival, a piece of out-of-date antiquarianism. In the seventh century the Trullan Council shows that the Agape still existed. Funeral or commemorative Agape are probably referred to by Tertullian, the Acts of John and Cyprian, certainly in the Canons of Hippolytus, in the Commentary on Job (Origen?) by Gregory of Nazianzus, Augustine, Chrysostom and others."

### RELATIVE ORDER OF THE AGAPE AND EUCHARIST WHEN UNITED.

Did the Agape or the Eucharist come first? On the one hand, we have the precedent of the Last Supper, where the Eucharist followed the meal, and the suggestion in 1 Corin-



## THE SACRAMENT OF THE EUCHARIST

thians ii. that the Corinthian Agape came first. In the *Didaché*, if the view taken above (1 Cor. ii. 2) be right, the Agape precedes, and the 'fencing of the tables' is followed by the Eucharist. In the exceptional case, in the Thebaid, in the fifth century, the Agape (if there was one) clearly came first. On the other hand, in Acts, xx. 11, we have the order "breaking bread" and "eating." If the former means the Eucharist and the latter the Agape, the order is reversed. It is quite possible, however, that "breaking bread" and "eating" are here one and the same thing, and refer to the Eucharist and the meal combined, in which case we can make no deductions from the words. As has been seen, Chrysostom, in his homily on 1 Corinthians, makes the Eucharist precede, i.e. not in his own day merely, but in the primitive ages. We need perhaps lay no great stress on the late evidence of the Thebaid on the one hand or Chrysostom on the other. *The Fathers of the fourth or fifth century probably had no more knowledge of Christian antiquities in this department than we have.* Chrysostom was no doubt influenced in his view of the Apostolic age by the customs of his own day, and the Christians of the Thebaid may have been merely trying to follow what appeared to them to have been the custom at the Last Supper. Confining ourselves, then, to the early evidence of the New Testament and the *Didaché*, it certainly seems more probable than not that the Agape came first, and that the Eucharist immediately followed. This is Bishop Lightfoot's view (Hastings, *Encyclopedia of Religion and Ethics*, p. 173).

This encyclopedia further comments on the origin of the word "agape" and quotes different writers and views as to the original meaning of brotherly love at Christian assemblies, and mentions the "kiss of love," which in early times, and still, in the East, is characteristic of Christian assemblies.

According to Chrysostom, it appears that in his day and for some time previously, the Agape had been held in the Church, but as to when this practice actually began there does not seem to be any clear evidence (Keating, *Agape and Eucharist*, p. 143). On page 145, Keating writes of the dangers with which the feast was surrounded. "From the earliest

## ISLAMIC REVIEW

days of Christianity, as we have seen, these dangers were serious to Christians living in the midst of corrupt Jewish or heathen civilization, of which clubs and social feasts formed a great part, but in the days of persecution, though scandals might occasionally occur in connection with the Agape, it was an undoubted bond of union and strength. . . . But now, under Constantine, official recognition and State patronage had been given to Christianity, it was inevitable that evil results should begin to indicate themselves in the case of this ideal union, which now began to sow the seeds of its final decay." Various Church dignitaries added their warnings; Gregory says: ". . . You, O holy martyrs, call I to witness, these children of lust have changed your honours into disgrace" (*op. cit.*, p. 147). These warnings were not confined to Eastern writers.

*De Duplici Martyrio*, which is sometimes ascribed to St. Osfnian, is evidently a later work. "Drunkenness," he says, "has become in our Africa to such an extent a custom that men hardly consider it a sin. Do we not see that one Christian is pressed by another to drink himself full at the memorials of the martyrs. . . . Is this to be regarded as a lesser sin than offering a goat to Bacchus?" (Keating, *op. cit.*, p. 419).

And similarly St. Augustine says: "Those debaucheries and lavish banquets in cemeteries are usually believed by a sensual and ignorant populace to be not only commemorations of martyrs, but even consolation to the dead. . . . Indeed, both in East and West, there seems to have been a tendency on the part of the ignorant populace to confuse these Agapæ with the heathen Parentalia and sacrificial festivals" (Keating, *op. cit.*, p. 150).

"And so we arrive at the beginning of the sad end of this beautiful and characteristically Christian custom of love feasts when the Church itself was obliged to discontinue them and forbid their celebration in sacred buildings. The Council of Laodicea (*circa* A.D. 363) enacts that it is not lawful to hold the so-called Agapæ in the churches or assemblies and to eat or set out couches in the house of God" (Keating, *op. cit.*, p. 151).



## THE SACRAMENT OF THE EUCHARIST

This author writes freely on the relationship of the Agape and Eucharist and leaves the impression that the two were certainly connected and part of the same function and in addition a survival of the Parentalia of the non-Christian faiths and the Jewish Qi'ddish. This being probable, where does the idea of the Catholic Mass and Transubstantiation spring from? I myself judge that the intention of Jesus of Nazareth was entirely confined to the Jewish custom; we know that he was of the Jewish race and conformed to the customs of his people.

Lundy, in his *Monumental Christianity* (p. 82), says the following on the point: "Not only was the Eucharist guarded from all intrusions of the Pagans, but even the different grades of catechumens were not permitted to be present at its celebration. Whether or not the doctrine of Christ's real presence in the Eucharist or Transubstantiation was then taught we have no means of ascertaining. . . ."

He continues again on page 351 to say: "But there is another matter bearing on this clause of the Creed, which is now to be considered. It is that of the Agape or Love Feasts of the ancient Christians, a pagan illustration of which in the Triclinium stands at the head of this chapter. In the time of the Apostles and long afterwards there was a frugal and social meal partaken of in connection with the Lord's Supper, which was paramount. At first the Agape preceded the Lord's Supper; but owing to some abuse, doubtless, it succeeded that more important celebration afterwards. . . . Paul evidently refers to the Agape when he speaks of the drunken revel made of it at Corinth, in 1 Corinthians xi. 20-23, in the eating of a supper *before* the celebration of the Lord's. . . . At Troas, where St. Paul took leave of the Ephesian Presbyters, he celebrated the Agape and the Communion together (Acts xx)."

Much has been said by various writers in early Christian times about the secrecy necessary and the exclusion of the Pagans and those not permitted to be present at the Mysteries, but from a dialogue between Triephon, a Christian, and Critias, a pagan, which is mentioned in G. S. Faber, *Aposto-*

## ISLAMIC REVIEW

*licity of Trinitarianism* (vol. i. p. 217) it is evident that the palmary secret of the Christian Mysteries was the Doctrine of the Trinity; in the book mentioned, corroborative evidence is quoted from Christian writers which leaves little doubt of this fact.

"The many lights so much insisted on by mere Ritualists were just as necessary for the one as for the other. The custom of having the two in connection may have originated in our Lord's institution of the Memorial Supper of Bread and Wine in connection with the Jewish Passover, a feast not only celebrated publicly at the Temple in Jerusalem by the whole nation on the anniversary of its deliverance from Egypt, but also as a social festivity enjoyed by every Hebrew family at home. It was in this special manner that our Lord celebrated the Passover with his disciples when he instituted the Holy Supper. It was in the evening when all Oriental peoples took the principal meal of the day. Most likely, therefore, in imitation of this, and as a memorial of it, did the Apostles and early Christians celebrate the Agape and the Holy Supper in the evening, though in Pliny's time it had become a necessity to forgo this pious custom on account of spies and persecution and change the time to the morning just before daybreak" (Lundy's *Monumental Christianity*).

Now let us find evidence in another direction to show its existence in non-Christian races and in antiquity. Doane in his *Bible Myths* (p. 305) says: "According to Christian belief, Jesus *instituted this Sacrament*—as it is called—and it was observed by the primitive Christians, as he had enjoined them; but we shall find that this breaking of bread and drinking of wine—supposed to be the body and blood of a god—is simply another piece of paganism watched by the Christians."

The Eucharist was instituted many hundreds of years before the time assigned for the birth of Christ Jesus. Cicero, the greatest orator of Rome, and one of the most illustrious of her statesmen, born 106 B.C., mentions it in his works and wonders at the strangeness of the rite. "How can a man be so stupid," says he, "as to imagine that which he eats to be a god?" There had been an esoteric meaning attached to it



## THE SACRAMENT OF THE EUCHARIST

from the first establishment of the mysteries among the Pagans and the Eucharist as one of the oldest rites of antiquity.

The adherents of the Grand Lama of Tibet and Tartary offer their god a sacrament of bread and wine. Pythagoras, the Greek philosopher, performed this ceremony of the sacrament (Higgins, *Anacalypsis*, vol. ii. p. 60).

The Kenite King of Righteousness, Melchizedek, a priest of the Most High God, brought out bread and wine, as a sign or symbol of worship, as the mystic elements of Divine presence. In the visible symbol of bread and wine they worshipped the invisible presence of the Creator of heaven and earth (see Gen. xiv. 18-19).

Not only were bread and wine brought forth by Melchizedek when he blessed Abraham, but it was offered to God and eaten before Him by Jethro and the elders of Israel, and some at least of the mourning Israelites broke bread and drank the cup of consolation in remembrance of the departed, "to comfort them for the dead."

M. Renan,<sup>1</sup> speaking on Mithraism, says: "It forged a very lasting bond of brotherhood between its initiates; it had a Eucharist, a supper so like the Christian Mysteries, that Justin Martyr the Apologist can only find one explanation of the apparent identity, namely, that Satan, in order to deceive the human race, determined to imitate the Christian ceremonies and stole them."

Tertullian speaks also of the Mithraists celebrating the Eucharist, and says the Devil copied the Christian Mysteries. "The Eleusinian Mysteries, or Sacrament of the Lord's Supper, was the most august of all the pagan ceremonies celebrated, more especially by the Athenians, every fifth year, in honour of Ceres, the goddess of corn, who, in allegorical language, *had given us her flesh to eat*; as Bacchus, the god of wine, in like sense, had given us his blood to drink. . . ."

From these ceremonies is derived the very name attached to our Christian sacrament of the Lord's Supper—"those holy Mysteries"—and not one or two, but absolutely all and every one of the observances used in our Christian solemnity. Very

<sup>1</sup> Renan's *Hibbert Lecture*, p. 35.

## ISLAMIC REVIEW

many of the forms of expression in that solemnity are precisely the same as those that appertained to the pagan rite (Taylor's *Diegesis*, p. 212).

Prodicus (a Greek sophist of the fifth century B.C.) says that the ancients worshipped bread as Demetes (Ceres) and wine as Dionysus (Bacchus); therefore when they ate the bread and drank the wine, after it had been consecrated, they were doing as the Romanists claim to do at the present day, i.e. eating the flesh and drinking the blood of their god" (Muller, *Origin of Religion*, p. 18; *Isis Unveiled*, ii. 513).

Mosheim, the celebrated historian, acknowledges that "The profound respect that was paid to the Greek and Roman *Mysteries*, and the extraordinary sanctity that was attributed to them, induced the Christians of the second century to give *their* religion a *mystic* air, in order to put it on an equal footing in point of dignity with that of the Pagans. For this purpose they gave the name of *Mysteries* to the institutions of the Gospel, and decorated particularly the 'Holy Sacrament' with that title; they used the very terms employed in the *Heathen Mysteries* and adopted some of the rites and ceremonies of which these renowned mysteries consisted. This imitation began in the eastern provinces, but after the time of Adrian, who first introduced the mysteries among the Latins, it was followed by the Christians who dwelt in the western part of the empire. A great part, therefore, of the service of the Church, in this—the second—century had a certain air of the Heathen Mysteries and resembled them considerably in many particulars." <sup>1</sup>

### THE ELEUSINIAN MYSTERIES AND CHRISTIAN SACRAMENTS COMPARED.

(1) But as the benefit of Initiation was great, such as were convicted of witchcraft, murder, even though unintentional, or any other heinous crime, they were debarred from these mysteries (Bell's *Pantheon*, vol. i. p. 282).

(1) For as the benefit is great, if, with a true and penitent heart and lively faith, we receive that holy sacrament, etc., if any be an open and notorious liver, or hath done wrong to his neighbour, etc., that he presume not to come to the Lord's Table (*Episcopal Communion Service*).

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<sup>1</sup> *Ecclesiastical History*, Century 2, Part II, sec. 5.

## THE SACRAMENT OF THE EUCHARIST

(2) At their entrance, purifying themselves by washing their hands in *holy water*; they were at the same time admonished to present themselves with pure minds, without which the external cleanness of the body would by no means be accepted (Bell's *Pantheon*, vol. i. p. 282).

(3) The priest who officiated at these sacred solemnities, were called Hiercophants, or "revealers of holy things" (Taylor's *Diegesis*, p. 213).

(4) The pagan priest dismissed the congregation with these words: "The Lord be with you" (Taylor, p. 213).

(2) See the fonts of *holy water* at the entrance of every Catholic Church in Christendom for the same purpose. "Let us draw near with a true heart in full assurance of faith, having our hearts sprinkled from an evil conscience, and our bodies washed with pure water (Heb. x. 22).

(3) The priests who officiate at Christian solemnities are supposed to be "revealers of holy things" (Taylor, p. 213).

(4) The Christian priests dismiss their congregations with the words "The Lord be with you."

Doane, in his *Bible Myths*, p. 311, says: "Throughout the whole ceremony (the Mysteries of Bacchus), the name of the Lord was many times repeated, and His brightness or glory not only exhibited to the eye by the rays which surround His name (or His monogram, I.H.S.), but was made the peculiar theme or object of their triumphant exultation."

"Those who worship Serapis are Christians and those who call themselves bishops of Christ are vowed to Serapis," wrote the Emperor Adrian from Alexandria on his visit there in A.D. 124, and this would possibly explain the respectful and almost mournful tone in which, as Renan noted, "the Christian Sibyl announced to Serapis and Isis the end of their reign" (Renan, *Marc. Aurelius*, p. 433).

It is not impossible that the resemblance which thus deceived the Emperor was connected with the celebration of the Eucharist among certain sects of the Christians. The Adoration of the Sacred Water as the emblem of Osiris, which we have seen on the Herculean fresco, has many points in common with the exhibition of the Sacrament of the Mass to the people, and it is possible that the words of consecration were not altogether different in the two cases (Kenyon, *Greek Papyri*, p. 105).

To illustrate a resemblance of the Eucharist or Supper



## ISLAMIC REVIEW

with the Mithraic ritual, the following extract is given from Legge, *Forerunners of Christianity*, vol. ii. p. 247: "In other monuments, the same scene generally appears as a banquet at which Mithras and Helios are seated side by side at a table sometimes alone, but at others in company with different persons who can hardly be any other than initiates or worshippers. That this represents some sort of sacrament where a drink giving immortality was administered seems probable, and its likeness to representations of the Last Supper is sufficient to explain the complaint of Justin Martyr and other Fathers that the devil had set on the Mithraists to imitate in this and in other respects the Church of Christ."

As regards the crucifixion which forms the background for the sacrifice that gave rise to the idea of the Transubstantiation, J. M. Robertson, in his *Short History of Christianity*, p. 12, says: "What is clear is that the central narrative of the Gospel biography, the story of the Last Supper, Agony, Betrayal, Trial and Crucifixion is neither a contemporary report nor a historical tradition, but the simple transcript of a Mystery Drama. The proof lies in the very nature of the document"; and on page 20: "Such believers were wont to meet at simple religious banquets, of a kind common in the Græco-Roman world, where they ate and drank in a semi-ceremonial way. A sacrificial banquet of this kind was one of the most universal religious features of ancient religion, being originally the typical tribal ceremony; and though among the Jews it had been to a remarkable extent superseded by sacrifices without communion, the usage was once as general with them as with the Gentiles. . . . The presumption is that such a banquet was connected with the Semitic God-name Jesus or Joshua before the Christian era"; and farther on, on the same page: "As the less orthodox Jews had long dabbled in similar 'mysteries,' there is every probability that private 'Holy Suppers' had been practised even in Jewry by some groups long before the Christian period, whether or not in connection with the name of Jesus the 'Saviour.'"

The identification of Jesus with the Paschal Lamb, which was sacrificed on Passover, a feature noticed in connection

## THE SACRAMENT OF THE EUCHARIST

with the Biblical story, is connected with the entry of the sun into Aries, the zodiacal sign of the Ram, at the Vernal Equinox on March 21st. The Jewish ritual required that the lamb, which was slain from the foundation of the world, must be roasted, not boiled, connecting it with the sun myth. On page 44, J. M. Robertson, in his *Short History of Christianity*, says: "As early as the Peloponnesian War we find new religious societies arising among the humbler Athenians, making accessible to them Dionysiac or other Eastern mysteries of sacred baptism, and a sacred banquet of 'body and blood,' in which a kid was the victim."

The gradual rise of the sacramental nature of the Supper is admirably shown by Robertson (*op. cit.*, p. 189) as follows:—

"In the first ages of the Church, the notion of the divinity of the 'body and blood' of the communion meal was vague and undefined. The partakers certainly regarded the consecrated bread and wine as carrying some supernatural virtue, since they took away portions for medicinal use; but they thought of the meal very much as devout pagans thought of one of the same kind in their mysteries or temple ritual. Where their ritual phraseology was challenged as giving colour to the charge of cannibalism, the Fathers seem always to have explained that the terms were purely figurative; and such was the doctrine laid down by Augustine. But when Pagan culture had passed away, and there was none in the barbarized West to challenge the Church as such, the strange literalness of the original liturgy set up the stranger belief that what was eaten in the eucharist was by 'transubstantiation' the actual flesh and blood of the God-Man. Where such a belief was possible, it was the special interest of the priesthood to make the affirmation. A stupendous miracle, they claimed, was worked every time the eucharist was administered; but it was worked through the priest. He, and he only, could bring it about; and thus the central mystery and prodigy of the faith, the command of its most essential ministry, was a clerical monopoly. The economic and spiritual centre of gravity of the entire system was fixed in the priestly order.

"Under such a dominating conception, Christianity was

## ISLAMIC REVIEW

for the majority a religion 'neither of faith nor of works'; it was a religion of sacerdotal magic. Not he that believed, still less he that loved his neighbour, but only he that received the mystic rite at consecrated hands, was to be saved. Moral teaching there might be, but more than ever it was supererogatory. Already in the fourth century the sacerdotal quality of the rite was defined by the practice of solemnly 'elevating' the wine and the 'hostia' or sacrifice, as the bread was termed, before every distribution; and it had become common to administer it two or three times a week. Thus the 'missa' or Mass, as it had come to be termed (traditionally from the formula of dismissal, 'Ite, missa est,' corrupted into 'Missa est'—another Pagan detail) had passed from the status of a periodical solemnity to that of a frequent service; and the rite was developed by the addition of chants and responses till it became the special act of Christian worship. The 'symbols' were thus already far on the way to be worshipped; and at the beginning of the seventh century Gregory the Great enacted that the slightest irregularities in their use should be atoned for by penance. Thus 'if a drop from the cup should fall on the altar, the ministering priest must suck up the drop and do penance for three days; and the linen cloth which the drop touched must be washed three times over the cup and the water in which it was washed cast into the fire.'"

The same writer, in his work *Pagan Christs*, p. 140, writes, under the heading of "The Cannibal Sacrament," as follows: "Given such a modification, however, we have to reckon with a tendency that is seen to have been chronic in religious history—the tendency, namely, to revert to a foreign or archaic form of sacrifice or mystery in times of national disaster and uncertainty. . . . And that the idea of religious anthropophagy prevailed in the early Christian world is obvious from the central ritual of the cult, where the formulas, 'Take, eat, this is my body,' 'Drink ye all of it, for this is my blood,' cannot conceivably be other than adaptations from a mystery ritual in which a sacrificed God so spoke by the mouth of his priest." In the Fourth Gospel we have an amplifi-



## THE SACRAMENT OF THE EUCHARIST

cation in the same sense, the act of symbolical anthropophagy or theophagy being made the means of immortality:—

“I am the bread of life . . . I am the living bread, which came down out of heaven; if any man eat of this bread, he shall live for ever; yea, and the bread which I will give is my flesh, *for the life of the world*. . . . Except ye eat the flesh of the Son of Man and drink his blood, ye have not life in yourselves. He that eateth my flesh and drinketh my blood hath eternal life; *and I will raise him up at the last day*. For my flesh is true meat, and my blood is true drink. He that eateth my flesh and drinketh my blood abideth in me and I in him” (John vi. 48-56).

“The very repetitions are ritualistic; we have them in the ritual of the Khonds, and in the ritual of the pre-Christian Mexicans.

“The Mithraic mysteries, then, of the burial and resurrection of the Lord, the Mediator and Saviour; burial in a rock tomb and resurrection from that tomb; the sacrament of bread and water, the marking on the forehead with a mystic mark—all these were in practice like the Egyptian search for the lost corpse of Osiris, and the representation of his entombment and resurrection, before the publication of a Christian Gospel of a Lord who was buried in a rock tomb and rose from that tomb on the day of the sun, or of the Christian mystery of Divine communion with bread and water or bread and wine, which last were employed also in the mysteries of Dionysus, Sun-God and Wine-God, doubtless as representing *his* body and blood.” “Again, as there is record of an actual eating of a lamb in early Christian mysteries (Creuzer, *Das Mithreum von Neuenhem*, p. 37), a detail still partly preserved in the Italian usage of blessing both a lamb and the baked figure of a lamb at the Easter season, but officially superseded by the wafer of the Mass—so in the old Persian cult the sacrificed flesh was mixed with bread and baked in a round cake called Myazd or Myazda and sacramentally eaten by the worshippers” (*Pagan Christs*, p. 317).

The same writer, in the book *Christianity and Mythology*, p. 220, after a lengthy comment on the Christian myth, says:

## ISLAMIC REVIEW

"Here too, of course, there is room for doubt, as there is again to the statement of Procopius that the Franks in the sixth century sacrificed children to idols. But the important fact remains that the Christians retained for their sacramental food the old name of *hostia*, 'the victim,' and the Gospels all dwell on the eating and drinking of the God's body and blood with a literalness that is unintelligible on the hypothesis of mere originating allegory" (Matt. xxvi. 26-28; Mark xiv. 22-24; Luke xxii. 19-20; John vi. 48-58). ". . . And as it is now an admitted principle of comparative mythology that where there is a sacred banquet in connection with a worship, with a specified sacred food, *it is the God that is eaten*, we may take it as nearly certain that just as some Christian groups ate a baked image of a lamb, others would carry the freedom of symbolism further and make a dough image of a child. . . . When nothing in human or animal shape was baked for the old cult offerings, the mere round cake (often marked by a cross as in the hot cross bun still in Christian use) stood for the God or Goddess as Sun or Moon; and this is the explanation of the Catholic wafer, reverently described as 'Jesus' or 'God' in the Anglican High Church ritual of the present time—Jesus is there revealed by his devoutest worshippers as a Sun-God."

The subject is discussed fully in pages 386-394 of the same book with arguments from Tertullian and other Christian Fathers and writers, with comments on Paul, etc., but it is too lengthy to be mentioned, except as a reference; sufficient has been said to show the nature of the claim of the Eucharist, so that it can be relegated to mythology and antiquity.

There is one further reference that may be added, showing the Oriental and Jewish origin of the legend with an Hellenic analogy. Whittaker, in his *Origins of Christianity*, p. 15, says: "But if Israel had received its monotheism by divine revelation, how was the attainment of the same conviction by heathen philosophers to be explained? To admit that it could be attained by natural light would make revelation superfluous, or would place the chosen people on an inferior level. In the absence of philosophic science, it was easy to devise an explanation. The Pentateuch, as everyone knew, was of primeval

## THE SACRAMENT OF THE EUCHARIST

antiquity. The Greek philosophers, it was equally well known, had all borrowed their systems from the East. Evidently, then, the Mosaic revelation, or some fragments of it, had been communicated to Plato and Aristotle. This was in its way a liberal view. It permitted the pious Israelite to read and appreciate the books of the heathen. The more open-minded of the Christian Fathers in their turn found it very convenient, and so late as the seventeenth century it was still alive."

The evidence mentioned in the course of this article is sufficiently clear to prove the antiquity and universality of existence of a rite in connection with a social meal in relation to an act of worship, in the performance of which in ancient times there was human or animal sacrifice, later commuted to baked images of bread, in form human or animal. This rite is closely connected with Sun worship and astronomical phenomena, lunar and precessional, which ritual is of extreme antiquity. It was believed by the Jews, from whom the Christians adopted it in its entirety—lock, stock and barrel. It formulated the Sacrament of the Mass with its dogma of Transubstantiation, or the miracle of the change into the actual body and blood of Jesus the "crucified Saviour." Pious Christians and Catholics by subjective suggestion and hallucinations see visions of Jesus of Nazareth, nailed or fixed to a cross as a sacrifice for men; but the real truth is this: Jesus was *not* nailed to the cross. The word "crucifixion" is derived from *crux*, "cross," and *facio*, "to make"—in other words, making a cross, or crossing over, the Pass-over, or Hebrew passach, which the sun performs on the day of the Vernal Equinox; if it were intended to mean to fix it should have been "*crux-cross figo*"—to fix—and rendered "crucified," not "crucified." In the ancient religions, it was a festival, celebrated with rejoicings, joy and gladness, heralding the returning spring, but the gloomy, distorted and perverted ideas of Christian founders, writers and authors have warped their judgment and turned joy into sadness and gloom, and the beautiful idea of human life and destiny into the horror-haunted idea of an eternal hell for those who do not believe as they do and follow their teaching and doctrine.



### SOME IMPRESSIONS OF ISLAM BY A NON-MUSLIM

By CAROL RING

I CAME to the study of Islam with very much the usual opinions on "Muhammadanism" current in the West.

It is a commonplace that each country teaches history with a strong bias in its own favour, and with a very firm belief in the divinely appointed supremacy of its own race and creed. It justifies its own wars, says little or nothing of its own broken treaties, and often villifies the actions and even caricatures the customs of other nations in order to enhance the implications of its own superiority.

In English schools, in addition to the disadvantages of this more or less natural bias, the teaching of history at all stages is very limited in its survey. Beyond the British Empire and perhaps the ancient histories of Greece and Rome, and a map of the journeyings of St. Paul, with dates, the mind of Young England is rarely invited to wander. Thus it is that the ordinary educated man or woman in this country has extremely vague ideas on the subject of the Prophet Muhammad and his teaching.

The word "Islam" calls up dim suggestions of Turks, Caliphs and slaves; of the Muhammadan conquest of India and Persia (this very dim indeed!); of Saladin and romantic stories of the Crusades; together with camels and prayer-carpet, harems and veiled women, and perhaps mental pictures of exquisite architecture and domed mosques.

Nevertheless, it is a mistake to think that the average Englishman has any special contempt for Islam. He merely includes the Muslim peoples and religion in his comprehensive dislike and distrust for everything and everyone "foreign," and more especially for "coloured" foreigners and their creeds. His point of view is insular and childish rather than hostile or scornful.

He takes his history as it is served out to him by his

## SOME IMPRESSIONS OF ISLAM

teachers, unquestioningly, in serene ignorance of its source. But a great deal of our history of the early days of Christianity, and the seething creeds, factions, and bitter strifes among which it grew, including the amazing spread of the teachings of Muhammad, has come down to us from the writings of the monks of the twelfth and thirteenth centuries after Christ, and they did not love Islam. Christianity had not made much impression on the civilized world up to the time of Muhammad, and the power and success of Islam swept everything before it in those early centuries, so that from Delhi to Granada resounded the cry, "There is no God but God." It is perhaps understandable, therefore, that these monkish recorders, to whom the honour and reputation of their Church were of greater importance than mere truth, should have produced a literature of popes, saints, Churches, miracles, power and greatness most of which had never been heard of; and have so represented men and events as to throw discredit on the followers of every faith other than their own. Thus is the mind of the young student of English history prepared for the glow and passion of enthusiasm which inspired the Crusades, and which, in the words of a modern historian, "caused all the roads which led to the Holy City to be deluged with blood, to present nothing but the scattered spoils and wrecks of empires." And thus had I also learnt "history."

But to everyone interested in the hygiene of the human race, there existed a special attraction in a faith which can successfully forbid the use of alcohol, that destroyer of vision, of reason, and of virtue in all those over whom it spreads its poisonous fumes; and I was interested to study the life and personality of a teacher whose influence was great enough to hold back even undisciplined races of men, in chaotic times, from the indulgence of their appetites.

Whatever may be one's own creed, there must always be gratitude and humble appreciation for light and beauty and strength wherever they are revealed. Nor can any one human mind, nor any one human system contain the whole of infinite Truth; let the soul gladly bathe in every ray of Light it can glean, rather than spend its energy spitting out venom against

## ISLAMIC REVIEW

the votaries of other rays, crying: "My ray is better than thy ray; stand off, for I am holier than thou!"

Thus, if I may, I would say to Muslims: There seems no need for you to stand on the defensive as regards your Faith. You are the greatest monotheistic religion in the world, and you derive that great Ideal from a still older monotheism, which Abraham brought with him from the medley of faiths of Chaldea.

You have a Faith so simple and direct, at once so mystical and so practical, that if you live by its highest teaching criticism *must* be silenced. By the works of Islam shall men know Islam.

And why be at pains to defend the character of Muhammad himself? After all, he only claimed to be a "Prophet." Therein lies his strength. If there were occasions in his life when, judged by the standards of other ages, of other peoples steeped in other customs and ideas, and controlled by different circumstances, it can be said of him, "According to our ideas it would have been better if he had done this and not that," should it not be remembered that from the beginning of time no really great Leader has ever claimed to have given the world in one Manifestation complete and final knowledge, the entire Perfection of the Infinite?

And least of all your Muhammad.

"Lord of the weak, Thou art my Lord," he cries. "Am I then more than man, I who cannot even help or trust myself, unless God pleaseth?" And: "Verily, I am a man like you."

Here was a rare humility! Here was a teacher who would have been the last to claim that he was infallible, and could make no mistakes. Yet he was willing to be used as a Message-Bearer. This would have been natural if he had indeed considered himself of more than common clay; but in a man who "could not help or trust himself" it was heroic. We may, indeed, bow before the courage and selflessness of spirit which could accept such a charge, and the single-hearted earnestness which could carry it through. To be a "Message-Bearer" to over two hundred millions of men for over thirteen centuries! Do you really think you need trouble to explain or defend him?



## SOME IMPRESSIONS OF ISLAM

It has been well said that there is nothing like a white background to throw up a black spot. The world will always look for black spots, it is one of its chief amusements. But the founding of a great system of moral and mental discipline, the creation of a spiritual ideal by which men have nobly lived, and for which they have heroically died, the bringing to the realization of countless millions the supreme fundamental truth of the universe, "There is no God but God," is an achievement before which the seekers for black spots may well slink away ashamed. Do not let the followers of Muhammad waste time in trying to justify Muhammad; let them point to Islam.

One of the things that most strikes an observer about this Eastern dreamer, this indifferently educated mystic, is his amazing grip of practical affairs. Whence did he acquire this executive ability, this power of organization, this genius of military leadership? Much as one may deplore the circumstances which forced this gentle, rather delicate man, the lover of little children, the sparer of his enemies, and the freer of slaves, to take up arms in defence of his followers and his Cause, yet one cannot help but recognize the brilliant generalship he showed; even to the introduction of trench warfare, a system not unknown to Christian nations of to-day.

And against all this one is bound to set the insistence on the practice of mercy and humanity to all. Most faiths have something to regret. The Crusades, the century of unspeakable horrors and atrocities wrought by the Inquisition, the massacres perpetrated by the Jews in the name of their Jehovah, the pogroms inflicted on the Jews in modern times in the name of Christianity, one and all only remind us not to judge an Ideal by its imperfect fulfilment on this earth.

Reforms introduced by Muhammad were always a decidedly daring advance on the moral life of his own days. If Muhammad could not abolish slavery, he could alleviate the conditions of the slave. If he knew it was useless to declaim against the universal practice of polygamy, he would regulate the conditions of marriage, limit the number of wives, and generally raise the deplorably degraded status of women in his day.

## ISLAMIC REVIEW

Personally, the various marriages of the Prophet himself never gave me a moment's discomfort. His first wife reigned alone until her death, and his later marriages appear for the most part to have been marriages only in name, and contracted for diplomatic purposes or from motives of compassion. When a victorious leader "marries" the widow of his defeated enemy, as the only way to protect her from an unspeakable fate, one can only admire the chivalry of the act, and be thankful that on the whole better customs prevail, even in warfare (and after) to-day.

But the tendency is to continual progress in the direction, not only of the relationship between the sexes, but in the treatment of children, servants, and even animals, and Islam gave an impetus to these various improvements; though it may well be that in the near future a new social consciousness may read a new meaning into some of Muhammad's teachings, the meaning of the spirit rather than of the letter.

This religion has ever been a religion of compassion—this religion which was founded in one of the harshest places of the world, amid grim and fierce surroundings, arid desert and cruel blinding heat.

It is true that during the course of the ages Muhammadanism has at times seemed to lend its sanction to savage warfare and conquest; for the misuse by men of a great ideal to authorize something wholly opposed to that ideal is no new thing. A recent writer, styled in the East "the one who reads between the lines," has said:—

"The wonderful Islamic democracy, based on the people's choice of great and idealist leaders, full of humanity and common sense, became an Asiatic despotism of dynasties, based on personal ambition, distrust and mutual hatred."

But the real spirit of Islam was only obscured; it never was lost. Compassion was no new note in the symphony of ideals; a thousand years before, it had been sounded by the Buddha, the Enlightened One, on the plains of India; five hundred years later by the Prophet of Nazareth in Palestine; and now again the Prophet of Arabia, who admired and honoured Jesus

## SOME IMPRESSIONS OF ISLAM

of the Jews, gave a fresh emphasis to the selfsame teaching. The tenderness of Muhammad's nature is beautifully expressed by a poet of the sixteenth century, who writes of the infant as soon as he was born turning his little face to the wall weeping and praying for lost souls.

It was ever this lovely attribute of pity that most attracted Muhammad in his conception of God.

"Allah, Who has imposed mercy on Himself," "The Compassionate, the Merciful," is ever dearer to his soul than "The Lord of the worlds, in Whose hand is dominion." And he whose orphaned childhood had known so many vicissitudes worshipped "The Hearer, the Near-at-hand, the Guardian and Deliverer, the Shelterer of the Orphan."

What a beautiful vision of the Divine Love we get in the passage in which Muhammad represents God as saying, "He who seeketh to approach Me one cubit, to him will I draw near two fathoms!"

Of Puritan ancestry, it is natural that I should be attracted by the absence of ritual in the worship of the Muslims. Regular appointed hours for prayer and the repetition of the Sacred Name, together with an act of conscious worship—these things are essential to the maintenance of a religious recollection in the midst of life's hurried and anxious days.

Beyond this—nothing. There are, it is true, beautiful mosques, where man can worship away from the heat and glare and noise of the market-place, but the mosques are bare. No images, symbolism, ceremonial, to distract the mind from the sublime conception that "There is no God but God." No titled and wealthy priesthood appointed to mediate between the soul and Allah, no magic, no mystery but the one supreme mystery of the Existence of God.

And yet with what power and passion and persistence has this Faith kept its hold on the mind of man! Can it be that all the performances of elaborate rituals, all the varied dogmas that make a bid for the allegiance of the heart of man, have less appeal than the simple single statement that "There is no God but God"? GOD and UNITY. And the one aspiration of each soul is to approach another cubit towards Him Who is



## ISLAMIC REVIEW

The One, The All Alone, The Beginning and the End, The Manifest and The Hidden.

I think that is what attracted Abraham. There is the fragment of a hymn to the Moon-God of Ur of the Chaldees which has come down to us in the baked brick, and which runs as follows:—

Father, long-suffering, full of forgiveness,  
Whose hand upholdeth the life of all mankind,  
First-born, Omnipotent, Whose heart is immensity—  
There is none who may fathom it.  
Thou alone, Thou art supreme.

Perhaps these words, and similar ideas of which they formed part, forced into the mind of the world's ancient Prophet the great perception that God was, and that He was One; to hold and to teach which great idea he ventured forth into the awful desert without a plan, without a path, in fearless faith.

However that may be, the impressions left on my mind from a study of Islam are mainly three:—

The genius of Muhammad in creating and evolving a lofty and practical system of ethics out of the welter of conflicting theories and passions of the time.

The extraordinary insight and wisdom of this religion, its knowledge of human weaknesses, its admirable discipline, and practical application to every aspect of life.

And, above all, the sublime conception of the Unity of God as its one great *motif*, so amply justified that that one idea alone is sufficient to waken and to hold the utmost devotion and worship of which the human heart is capable.

*Lá Iláha illa 'l-Láh*

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## ISLAMIC CONCEPTION OF HELL

By S. QUDRAT SHAH

CHRISTIANS are finding objections to the belief in the eternity of hell, which has been the accepted belief of the Christians

## ISLAMIC CONCEPTION OF HELL

for nearly two thousand years. They are just now considering that the idea of a hell where men will be tortured to eternity is derogatory to the idea that God is merciful.

It would interest the readers of the *Islamic Review* to learn that according to the Holy Qur-án the hell of the wicked will be the fire of their own making ; that all men will not be dumped into one furnace ; and there will be degrees, even in hell, in accordance with the nature of the sins.

“ Thus will Allah show them their deeds to be intense regret to them ” (ii. 167).

“ It is the fire kindled by Allah, which rises above the hearts ” (civ. 6, 7).

“ So the evil (consequences) of what they did shall afflict them and that which they mocked at shall encompass them ” (xvi. 34).

These verses show that the wicked will be punished, not by a relentless master in a specially prepared furnace, but their punishment will be a fire kindled by their own deeds. Bad deeds produce regret and remorse, which are symbolized in the Qur-án as fire or hell. Just as a great fire cannot be put out by mere breath when it has been kindled, so the regret and the remorse of the wicked will grow in intensity proportionate to the seriousness of their sins. The wicked deeds are, so to speak, fuel to the fire until they are consumed. It is for this reason that the Holy Qur-án speaks of this fuel as what our own hands have sent forth :—

“ And whatever affliction befalls you, it is on account of what your hands have wrought ” (xlii. 30).

“ The day when man shall see what his two hands have sent before ” (lxxviii. 40).

Just as fire burns all dross, so the remorse or hell of the next world will burn up all filth from a person's spiritual nature.

Readers of *Hamlet* know that when the King of Denmark saw the drama which disclosed the wicked deed of a brother against his brother, the King was seized with a serious mental agony, because this act brought to his memory his own deed. This is hell. The case of the wicked after death will be of a

## ISLAMIC REVIEW

similar nature. The wicked deeds will assume material shapes and haunt and torment the wicked. Says the Holy Qur-án :—

“ And what they never thought of shall become plain to them from Allah. And the evil (consequences) of what they wrought shall become plain to them, and the very thing they mocked at shall beset them ” (xxxix. 47, 48).

Just as there are grades in different deeds, there will be grades in punishment. Says the Holy Qur-án :—

“ It has seven gates ; for every gate there shall be a separate party of them ” (xv. 44).

“ And for all are degrees according to what they did ” (xlvi. 19).

It is thus plain that there will be no injustice of any kind in the hereafter. There is no verse in the Holy Qur-án which says that the evildoers shall remain in hell to all eternity.

The Holy Qur-án over and over again emphasizes the fact that the mental agonies of this life have a hellish nature in them ; even to be disgraced is hell :—

“ Then on the resurrection day He will bring them to disgrace ” (xvi. 27).

There are at least thirty verses in the Holy Qur-án which say that the condition of the wicked after death will result from the consequences of their actions in this life. The charge of cruelty and injustice cannot be brought against God : men who suffer will have themselves to blame :—

“ And whatever good thing you spend shall be paid back to you in full, and you shall not be wronged ” (ii. 272).

“ Then every soul shall be paid back in full what it has earned, and they shall not be dealt with unjustly ” (ii. 281).

“ Then how will it be when We shall gather them together on a day about which there is no doubt, and every soul shall be fully paid what it has earned, and they shall not be dealt with unjustly ” (iii. 24).

“ And Allah is not unjust to them, but they are unjust to themselves ” (iii. 116).

“ Then shall every soul be paid back fully what it has earned, and they shall not be dealt with unjustly ” (iii. 160).

“ This is for what your own hands have sent before and



## ISLAMIC CONCEPTION OF HELL

because Allah is not in the least unjust to the servants " (iii. 181).

" Surely Allah does not do injustice to the weight of an atom, and if it is a good deed He multiplies it and gives from Himself a great reward " (iv. 40).

" Whoever brings a good deed, he shall have ten like it, and whoever brings an evil deed, he shall be recompensed only with the like of it, and they shall not be dealt with unjustly " (vi. 161).

" And they did not do Us any harm, but they did injustice to their own souls " (vii. 160).

" So it is not Allah Who does them injustice, but they are unjust to themselves " (ix. 70).

" And (as for) those who have evil, the punishment of an evil is the like of it " (x. 27).

" And they will manifest regret when they see the chastisement, and the matter shall be decided between them with justice, and they shall not be dealt with unjustly " (x. 54).

" And We did not do them injustice, but they were unjust to themselves " (xi. 101).

" And most surely your Lord is the Lord of forgiveness to people, notwithstanding their injustice " (xiii. 6).

" And Allah was not unjust to them, but they were unjust to themselves " (xvi. 33).

" And if Allah had destroyed men for their iniquity, He would not leave on the earth a single creature, but He respites them till an appointed time " (xvi. 16).

" And We did them no injustice, but they were unjust to themselves " (xvi. 118).

" This is due to what your two hands have sent before, and because Allah is not in the least unjust to the servants " (xxii. 10).

" Whoever brings good, he shall have better than it " (xxvii. 89).

" Whoever brings good, he shall have better than it, and whoever brings evil, those who do evil shall not be rewarded (for) aught except what they did " (xxviii. 84).

" So it was not beseeing for Allah that He should deal

## ISLAMIC REVIEW

with them unjustly, but they dealt unjustly with their own souls " (xxx. 9).

" That Allah may reward the truthful for their truth and chastise the hypocrites if He please or turn to them (mercifully), surely Allah is Forgiving, Merciful " (xxx. 24).

" And they shall not be dealt with unjustly, and every soul shall be paid back fully what it has done " (xxxix. 69).

" This day every soul shall be rewarded for what it has earned ; no injustice (shall be done) this day " (xl. 17).

" And whatever affliction befalls you, it is on account of what your hands have wrought, and (yet) He pardons most (of your faults) " (xlii. 30).

" And We are not unjust to them, but they themselves are unjust " (xliii. 76).

" And Allah created the heavens and the earth with truth and that every soul may be rewarded for what it has earned and they shall not be wronged " (xlv. 22).

" And for all are degrees according to what they did, and that He may pay them back fully their deeds, and they shall not be wronged " (xlvi. 19).

" My word shall not be changed, nor am I in the least unjust to the servants " (l. 29).

" On that day men shall come forth in sundry bodies that they may be shown their works. So he who has done an atom's weight of good shall see it. And he who has done an atom's weight of evil shall see it " (xcix. 6-8).

The trend of these verses and the repetition of the subject of justice of God towards His creatures point to the foreknowledge of the Almighty as to the criticism of the present-day critics long before these ideas came into their heads.

The reader will see that the dealings of God with His creatures are just. To the good He is just and bounteous, and to the wicked just and pardoning : " Whoever brings a good deed, he shall have ten like it, and whoever brings an evil deed, he shall be recompensed only with the like of it, and they shall not be dealt with unjustly " (vi. 161). This shows that God encourages good and puts a premium on it, but He discourages

## ISLAMIC CONCEPTION OF HELL

evil. This was necessary in order to check evil and to encourage good.

### MERCIFULNESS OF GOD.

The mercy of God has been emphasized so forcibly in the Holy Qur-án that our wonder increases as we read verse after verse on the subject :—

“ Say : To whom belongs what is in the heavens and the earth ? Say : To Allah ; He has ordained mercy on Himself ” (vi. 12).

“ Your Lord has ordained mercy on Himself, so that if any one of you does evil in ignorance, then turns after that and acts aright, then He is Forgiving, Merciful ” (vi. 54).

“ Your Lord is the Lord of all encompassing mercy ” (vi. 148).

“ And mercy encompasses all things ” (vii. 156).

“ Say : In the grace of Allah and in His mercy, in that they should rejoice ” (x. 58).

“ Most surely Allah is the Lord of grace towards men, but most of them do not give thanks ” (x. 60).

“ Say : O My servants ! who have acted extravagantly against their own souls, do not despair of the mercy of Allah ; surely Allah forgives the faults altogether ; surely He is the Forgiving, the Merciful ” (xxxix. 53).

The reader will see that such mercifulness is inconsistent with the idea that God is vindictive or cruel. Whatever suffering the wicked are going to undergo is due to their own wrongs, and certainly not more than what they have deserved. How long the period in hell will last is known to God alone. But it will all be the natural consequence of our own actions.

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**Friday Prayer and Sermon.**—At the London Muslim Prayer House —111, Campden Hill Road, Notting Hill Gate, London—every Friday at 1 p.m. **Sunday Lectures** at 5 p.m. **Qur-án and Arabic Classes**—every Sunday at 3.30 p.m.

**Service, Sermon, and Lectures** every Sunday at the Mosque, Woking, at 3.15 p.m. Every Friday at 1 p.m.



### MAN IN THE QUR-AN

By SYED MAQBOOL AHMAD, B.A.

*(Continued from No. 2, February, 1928, p. 79.)*

30. "So by your Lord! We will most certainly gather them together and the devils, then shall We certainly cause them to be present round hell on their knees. Then We will most certainly draw forth from every sect of them him who is most exorbitantly rebellious against the Beneficent God. Again We do certainly know best those who deserve most to be burned therein. And there is not one of you but shall come to it; this is an unavoidable decree of your Lord. And We will deliver those who guarded against evil, and We will leave the unjust therein on their knees" (xix. 68-72).

31. "And whoever turns away from My reminder, his shall surely be a straitened life, and We will raise on him on the day of resurrection blind. He shall say: My Lord! why hast Thou raised me blind, and I was a seeing one indeed? He will say: Even so. Our communications came to you, but you neglected them; even thus shall you be forsaken to-day. And thus do We recompense him who is extravagant and does not believe in the communication of his Lord; and certainly the chastisement of the hereafter is severer and more lasting" (xx. 124-127).

32. "Had those who disbelieve but known of the time when they shall not be able to ward off the fire from their faces nor from their backs, nor shall they be helped. Nay, it shall come on them all of a sudden and cause them to become confounded, so they shall not have the power to avert it, nor shall they be respited. And certainly apostles before you were scoffed at, then there befell those of them who scoffed that at which they had scoffed" (xxi. 39-41).

33. "Surely you and what you worship besides Allah are the firewood of hell; to it you shall come. Had these been gods, they would not have come to it and all shall abide therein. For them there shall be groaning and therein they shall not hear, surely as for those for whom the good has already

## MAN IN THE QUR-AN

gone forth from Us, they shall be kept far off from it ; they will not hear its faintest sound, and they shall abide in that which their souls long for. The great fearful event shall not grieve them, and the angels shall meet them. This is your day which you were promised " (xxi. 98-103).

34. " Surely Allah will cause those who believe and do good deeds to enter gardens beneath which rivers flow ; surely Allah does what He pleases " (xxii. 14).

35. " These are two adversaries who dispute about their Lord—then as to those who disbelieve, for them are cut out garments of fire ; boiling water shall be poured over their heads. With it shall be melted what is in their bellies, and their skins as well. And for them are the whips (clubs) of iron. Whenever they will desire to go forth from it, from grief, they shall be turned back into it, and taste the chastisement of burning. Surely Allah will make those who believe and do good deeds enter gardens beneath which rivers flow ; they shall be adorned therein with bracelets of gold and with pearls, and their garments therein shall be of silk. And they are guided to godly words and they are guided into the path of the Praised One " (xxii. 19-24).

36. " And as for him whose good deeds are preponderant, these are the successful. And as for him whose good deeds are light, these are they who shall have lost their souls, abiding in hell. The fire shall scorch their faces, and they therein shall be in severe affliction. Were not my communications recited to you ? but you used to reject them. They shall say : O our Lord ! adversity came over us and we were an erring people. O our Lord ! Take us out of it ; then if we return to evil surely we shall be unjust. He shall say : Go away into it and speak not to Me. Surely, there was a party of My servants who said : O our Lord ! we believe, so do Thou forgive us and have mercy on us, and Thou art the best of the Merciful ones. But you took them for a mockery until they made you forget my remembrance and you used to laugh at them. Surely I have rewarded them this day because they were patient, that they are the achievers. He will say : How many years did you tarry in the earth ? They will say :

## ISLAMIC REVIEW

We tarried a day or part of a day, but ask those who keep account. He will say: You did tarry a little, had you but known it " (xxiii. 102-115).

37. " Think not that those who disbelieve shall escape in the earth, and their abode is the fire; and certainly evil is the resort " (xxiv. 57).

38. " But they reject the hour, and We have prepared a burning fire for him who rejects the hour. When it shall come into their sight from a distant place, they shall hear its vehement raging and roaring. And when they are cast into a narrow place in it, bound, they shall there call out for destruction. Call not this day for one destruction but call for destructions many. Say: Is this better or the abiding garden which those who guard against evil are promised? That shall be a reward and resort for them. They shall have therein what they desire abiding in it; it is a promise which it is proper to be prayed for from your Lord. And on the day when He shall gather them and whatever they served besides Allah, He shall say: was it you who led astray these My servants, or did they themselves go astray from the path? They shall say: Glory be to Thee; it was not beseeming for us that We should take any guardians besides thee, but Thou did'st make them and their fathers to enjoy until they forsook the reminder, and they were a people in perdition. So they shall indeed give you the lie in what you say, then you shall not be able to ward off or help, and whoever among you is unjust, We will make him taste a great chastisement " (xxv. 11-19).

39. " Whoever brings good he shall have better than it—and that shall be secure from terror on that day. And whoever brings evil, these shall be thrown down on their faces into the fire; shall you be rewarded for aught except what you did? " (xxvii. 89-90).

40. " And your Lord never destroyed the towns until he raised in their metropolis an apostle, reciting to them Our communications, and We never destroyed the towns except when their people were unjust. And whatever things you have been given are only a provision of this world's life and



## MAN IN THE QUR-AN

its adornment, and whatever is with Allah is better and more lasting ; do you not then understand ? ” (xxvii. 59-60).

41. “ And as for those who believe and do good deeds, We will most certainly do away their evil deeds and We will most certainly reward them the best of what they did ” (xxix. 7).

42. “ And they ask you to hasten on chastisement ; and had not a term been appointed, the chastisement would certainly have come to them and most certainly it will come to them ; and most certainly it will come to them all of a sudden while they will not perceive. They ask you to hasten on chastisement, and most surely hell encompasses the unbelievers ; on the day when chastisement shall cover them, and from beneath their feet ; and He shall say : Taste what you did. . . . And as for those who believe and do good, We will certainly give them abode in the high places in gardens beneath which rivers flow, abiding therein ; how good the reward of the workers ” (xxix. 53-55, 58).

43. “ As for those who believe and do good, they shall have surely gardens of bliss, abiding in them ; the promise of Allah ; a true promise and He is the Mighty, the Wise ” (xxxii. 8-9).

44. “ And could you but see when the guilty shall hang down their heads before their Lord ! We have seen and We have heard, therefore send us back, we will do good ; surely now we are certain. . . . So taste, because you neglected the meeting of this day of yours ; surely We forsake you ; and taste the abiding chastisement for what you did ” (xxxii. 12, 14).

45. “ As for those who believe and do good deeds, the gardens are their abiding-place ; an entertainment for what they did. And as for those who transgress, their abode is the fire ; whenever they desire to go forth from it, they shall be brought back into it, and it will be said to them : Taste the chastisement of fire which you called a lie. And most certainly we will make them taste of the nearer chastisement before the greater chastisement that haply they may turn ” (xxii. 19-21).

46. “ Then We gave the Book for an inheritance to those

## ISLAMIC REVIEW

whom We chose from among Our servants ; but of them is he who makes his soul to suffer a loss, and of them is he who takes a middle course, and of them is he who is foremost in deeds of goodness by Allah's permission, this is the great excellence Gardens of perpetuity, they shall enter therein—they shall be made to wear therein bracelets of gold and pearls, and their dress therein shall be silk. And they shall say : All praise is due to Allah, who has made the grief to depart from us ; most surely our Lord is Forgiving, Multiplier of rewards. Who made us alight in a house abiding forever out of His grace ; toil shall not touch us therein, nor shall fatigue therein afflict us. And as for those who disbelieve, for them is the fire of hell ; it shall not be finished with them entirely so that they should die, nor shall the chastisement thereof be lightened to them ; even thus do We retribute every grateful one. And they shall cry therein for succour : Our Lord take Us out, we will do good deeds other than those which we used to do. Did We not preserve you alive long enough, so that he who would be mindful in it should mind ? and there came to you the warner ; therefore taste ; because for the unjust there is no helper " (32-37).

47. " And were Allah to punish men for what they earn, He would not leave on the back of it any creature, but He respites them till an appointed term ; so when their doom shall come, then surely Allah is Seeing with respect to His servant " (xxxv. 45).

48. " Surely the dwellers of garden on that day be in an occupation quite happy, they and their wives shall be in shades, reclining on raised couches. They shall have fruits therein, and they shall have whatever they desire. Peace—a word from a Merciful Lord. And withdraw aside to-day, O guilty ones ! did I not charge you, O children of Adam ! that you should not serve the devil ? Surely he is your open enemy, and that you should serve Me ; this is the right way. And certainly he led astray many people from among you. What ! could you not then understand ? This is the hell with which you were threatened. Enter into it this day because you disbelieved. On that day We will set a seal

## MAN IN THE QUR-AN

upon their mouths, and their hands shall speak to Us, and their feet shall bear witness of what they earned. And if We please We would certainly put out their eyes, then they would strive to get first to the way, but how should they see? And if We please We would surely transform them in their place, they would not be able to go on, nor will they return " (xxxvi. 55-67).

49. " Most surely you will taste the painful chastisement. And you shall not be rewarded except what you did, save the servants of Allah the purified ones. For them is a known sustenance, fruits, and they shall be highly honoured, in gardens of pleasure, on thrones facing each other. A bowl shall be made to go round them from water running out of springs, white, delicious to those who drink, there shall be no trouble in it, nor shall they be exhausted therewith. And with them shall be those who restrain the eyes, having beautiful eyes; as if they were the eggs carefully protected. Then shall some advance to others questioning each other. A speaker from them shall say: Surely I had a comrade of mine, who said: What! are you indeed of those who accept the truth? What! when we are dead and have become dust and bones, shall we then be brought certainly to judgment? He shall say: Will you look on? Then he looked down and saw him in the midst of hell. He shall say: By Allah you almost caused me to perish; and had it not been for the favour of my Lord, I would certainly have been among those brought up. Is it then that we are not going to die, except our previous death? and we shall not be chastised? Most surely this is the mighty achievement. For the like of this then let the workers work. Is this better as an entertainment or the tree of Zaqqum (Cactus)? surely We have made it to be the trial of the unjust. Surely it is a tree that grows in the bottom of hell; its produce (offshoots) are as it were the heads of serpents. Then most surely they shall eat of it and fill their bellies with it. Then most surely they shall have after it to drink of a mixture prepared in boiling water. Then most surely their return shall be to hell. Surely they found their fathers going astray, so in their footsteps they are being hastened on. And certainly



## ISLAMIC REVIEW

most of the ancients went astray before them, and certainly We sent among them warners. Then see how was the end of those warned, except the servants of Allah, the purified ones " (xxxvii. 38-73).

*(To be continued.)*

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### THE BATTLE OF BADR (January, A.D. 624)

THE first engagement between the Muslims and the Meccans took place at Badr. Muhammad gained the victory, and captured a number of prisoners. He directed his followers to take these captives to their homes and endeavour to convert them, permitting them to earn their ransom by teaching. The sentiment in the first of the following verses, is taken from chap. xli. of the Holy Qur-án.

Turn, turn away evil with manly respect,  
Ever strive to be first to let bitterness end;  
And the man who has scathed you with hate or neglect  
Will become in due time your most trustworthy friend.

When the victory's gained, and, on scouring the field,  
Fierce enemies, captured, fall into your power,  
Show that all to your clemency safely may yield,  
Without fear of revenge in your triumph's proud hour.

Take them home to your dwellings to earn their release,  
Let them teach to your sons their wise cunning and skill,  
And learn that you fight for but freedom and peace,  
And treat fallen foemen with gen'rous good will.

Then preach them the faith which you feel in your heart,  
Which nerves you with courage to conquer or die,  
Which bids thoughts of vengeance and malice depart,  
While forgiveness and mercy their places supply.

If your might in the battle the body has won,  
Seek with love in the home to lead captive the mind;  
May they enter your door, that is barred against none,  
And in your communion true brotherhood find.

'Tis alone in defence with the sword we may smite,  
If we hope for the blessing of God from above;  
That each soul by its conscience be guided is right,  
And religion be spread, not by force, but by love.

DR. AMHERST D. TYSSSEN, D.C.L., LONDON.

## WHAT IS ISLAM?

## WHAT IS ISLAM?

[The following is a very brief account of Islam, and some of its teaching. For further details please write to the IMÁM of the Mosque, Woking.]

**ISLAM, THE RELIGION OF PEACE.**—The word Islam literally means: (1) Peace; (2) the way to achieve peace; (3) submission; as submission to another's will is the safest course to establish peace. The word in its religious sense signifies complete submission to the Will of God.

**OBJECT OF THE RELIGION.**—Islam provides its followers with the perfect code whereby they may work out what is noble and good in man, and thus maintain peace between man and man.

**THE PROPHETS OF ISLAM.**—Muhammad, popularly known as the Prophet of Islam, was, however, the last Prophet of the Faith. Muslims, i.e. the followers of Islam, accept all such of the world's prophets, including Abraham, Moses and Jesus, as revealed the Will of God for the guidance of humanity.

**THE QUR-ÁN.**—The Gospel of the Muslim is the Qur-án. Muslims believe in the Divine origin of every other sacred book, but, inasmuch as all such previous revelations have become corrupted through human interpolation, the Qur-án, the last Book of God, came as a recapitulation of the former Gospels.

**ARTICLES OF FAITH IN ISLAM.**—These are seven in number: belief in (1) Allah; (2) angels; (3) books from God; (4) messengers from God; (5) the hereafter; (6) the measurement of good and evil; (7) resurrection after death.

The life after death, according to Islamic teaching, is not a new life, but only a continuance of this life, bringing its hidden realities into light. It is a life of unlimited progress; those who qualify themselves in this life for the progress will enter into Paradise, which is another name for the said progressive life after death, and those who get their faculties stunted by their misdeeds in this life will be the denizens of the hell—a life incapable of appreciating heavenly bliss, and of torment—in order to get themselves purged of all impurities and thus to become fit for the life in heaven. State after death is an image of the spiritual state, in this life.

The sixth article of faith has been confused by some with what is popularly known as Fatalism. A Muslim neither believes in Fatalism nor Predestination; he believes in Premeasurement. Everything created by God is for good in the given use and under the given circumstances. Its abuse is evil and suffering.

**PILLARS OF ISLAM.**—These are five in number: (1) declaration of faith in the Oneness of God, and in the Divine Messengership of Muhammad; (2) prayer; (3) fasting; (4) almsgiving; (5) pilgrimage to the Holy Shrine of Mecca.

**ATTRIBUTES OF GOD.**—The Muslims worship one God—the Almighty, the All-knowing, the All-just, the Cherisher of all the



## ISLAMIC REVIEW

Worlds, the Friend, the Guide, the Helper. There is none like Him. He has no partner. He is neither begotten nor has He begotten any son or daughter. He is Indivisible in Person. He is the Light of the heaven and the earth, the Merciful, the Compassionate, the Glorious, the Magnificent, the Beautiful, the Eternal, the Infinite, the First and the Last.

**FAITH AND ACTION.**—Faith without action is a dead letter. Faith is of itself insufficient, unless translated into action. A Muslim believes in his own personal accountability for his actions in this life and in the hereafter. Each must bear his own burden, and none can expiate for another's sin.

**ETHICS IN ISLAM.**—"Imbue yourself with Divine attributes," says the noble Prophet. God is the prototype of man, and His attributes form the basis of Muslim ethics. Righteousness in Islam consists in leading a life in complete harmony with the Divine attributes. To act otherwise is sin.

**CAPABILITIES OF MAN IN ISLAM.**—The Muslim believe in the inherent sinlessness of man's nature which, made of the goodliest fibre, is capable of unlimited progress, setting him above the angels and leading him to the border of Divinity.

**THE POSITION OF WOMAN IN ISLAM.**—Men and women come from the same essence, possess the same soul, and they have been equipped with equal capability for intellectual, spiritual and moral attainment. Islam places man and woman under like obligations, the one to the other.

**EQUALITY OF MANKIND AND THE BROTHERHOOD OF ISLAM.**—Islam is the religion of the Unity of God and the equality of mankind. Lineage, riches and family honours are accidental things; virtue and the service of humanity are the matters of real merit. Distinctions of colour, race and creed are unknown in the ranks of Islam. All mankind is of one family, and Islam has succeeded in welding the black and the white into one fraternal whole.

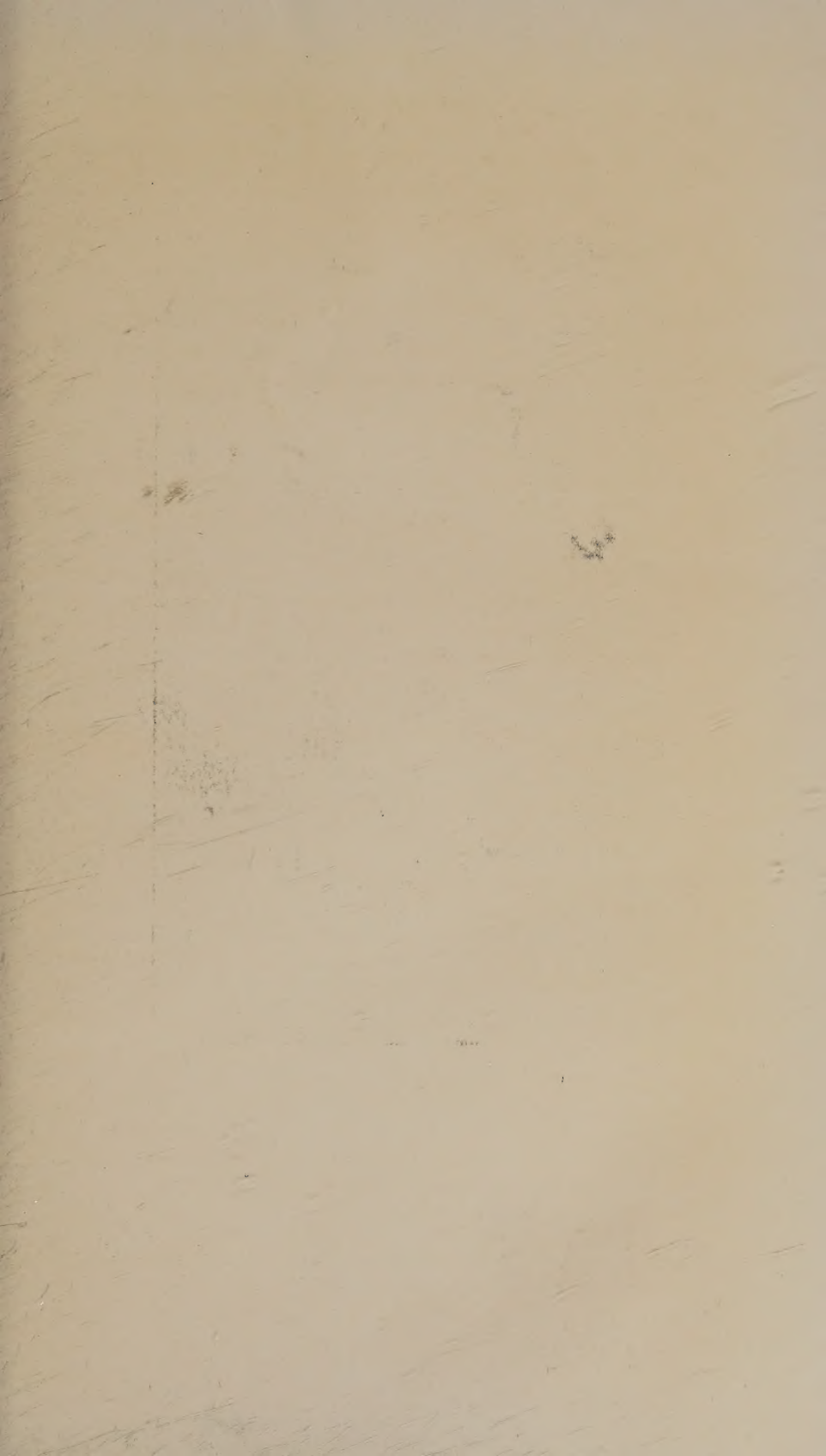
**PERSONAL JUDGMENT.**—Islam encourages the exercise of personal judgment and respects difference of opinion, which, according to the sayings of the Prophet Muhammad, is a blessing of God.

**KNOWLEDGE.**—The pursuit of knowledge is a duty in Islam, and it is the acquisition of knowledge that makes men superior to angels.

**SANCTITY OF LABOUR.**—Every labour which enables man to live honestly is respected. Idleness is deemed a sin.

**CHARITY.**—All the faculties of man have been given to him as a trust from God, for the benefit of his fellow-creatures. It is man's duty to live for others, and his charities must be applied without any distinction of persons. Charity in Islam brings man nearer to God. Charity and the giving of alms have been made obligatory, and every person who possesses property above a certain limit has to pay a tax, levied on the rich for the benefit of the poor.







"The Church of England, unfortunately, is too narrow and bigoted, and the whole thing seems to lack philosophy, and it does not seem altogether a simple faith. . . . Islamic faith is the most devout, . . . carrying a vast amount of truth and knowledge with it."

MISS EILEEN RAHÍMA LACEY,  
Worcester.